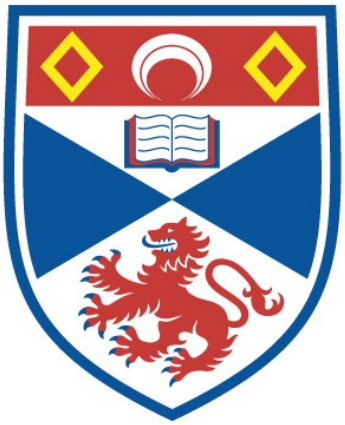
"LOS TOROS GUAPOS" : "GOOD-LOOKING BULLS", ANIMAL LIFE, ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL KNOW-HOW ON AN ANDALUSIAN BULL-BREEDING ESTATE

Robin Irvine

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2018

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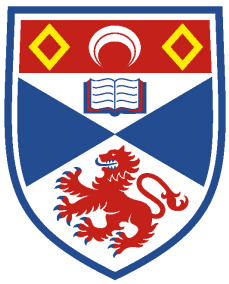

University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

8th June 2018

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Contents

Thesis Abstract

This thesis take the form of an ethnographic exploration of a bull-breeding estate called Partido de Resina (formerly Pablo Romero) in the countryside near Seville in Andalusia. The estate, founded in 1885, produces fighting bulls for taurine events in Southern France, Spain and Portugal. At the heart of the thesis is the life cycle of the fighting animals, every chapter being anchored to a particular point in the bull-breeding calendar and the lives of the stock. Each chapter draws out specific qualities of the world of the bulls from the perspective of Partido de Resina, rooting the bulls and their people in a wider Spanish and Andalusian landscape and history, with a focus on technical know-how and everyday ethics after the 2008 financial crisis. The professionals who care for the Partido de Resina bulls, cows, and calves are the human protagonists of this project; their working routines, hopes, concerns, and stories described through their interactions with the animals which they look after.

The core anthropological argument in the thesis is to show how different ethnographically salient forms of life emerge on and around the estate, sometimes weighted towards individual animals, sometimes towards bits of taurine bodies, or breeds, types, lineages, cohorts, and other groupings of stock. The varied, dynamic presence of animal life is contextualised in the literature of the 'animal turn' in anthropology, which has drawn non-human life into the ethnographic foreground. A case is made for a nuanced and contextual ethnographic attention to animal life and interiority as it emerges in the field, without an a priori emphasis on animal personhood or subjectivity. In foregrounding the qualities and concerns encountered and worked through during both routine livestock maintenance and extraordinary, definitive events like bullfights, the emergent, multiple character of taurine forms of existence become apparent.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork and writing that make up this thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement I have received from the moment I first set out to work with the good-looking bulls of the Partido de Resina estate in Andalusia. I would like to thank Dr Adam Reed and Dr Paloma Gay y Blasco, my supervisors, for nurturing this project from the very start and continuing to challenge me right through to the end.

I am grateful to José Luis Algora Cabello for inviting me to do my research with the Partido de Resina bulls and for being a consistently supportive mentor during my fieldwork. Joaquín Morera Garrido deserves a special thank you as my teacher and everyday companion in the fields of the estate. His patience and exigence, on sunny days and dreich days, shape this thesis.

I would also like to acknowledge in particular the hospitality and friendship of José Hurtado Nogales “Patillas” and María José Solís Solís, and their respective families, who went above and beyond to make me feel welcome in Villamanrique de la Condesa and El Aljarafe more widely. Simón Ruíz, Pedro Barragán Merino “Fino”, Francisco Díaz Rodríguez “Pajito”, Pedro Ángel Solís and their families also have my thanks as contributors to this project and as friends.

Pat and David Robinson had the dubious privilege of hosting me during the last three months of writing up. I know I will look back on those evenings of gentle admonitions, pool and drams of “Writers’ Tears” with gratitude. I am indebted to Dr Chrissie Wanner for her tireless editing and encouragement. Professor Garry Marvin deserves special recognition for being my first point of access to literature about the bulls and for being constantly enthusiastic about my own attempts to get to grips with the taurine world. My family, the Irvines - always inspirational, always positive - can also take credit for getting me over the finish line.

I am grateful to the Economic and Social Research Council for making this project financially viable by awarding me a 1 + 3 studentship.

Finally, I recognise the contribution of the animals at the heart of my research: Zahara, Bandolero, Bujía, Cabezón and Capricho, the horses who carried me through my fieldwork with a mixture of tolerance, impatience and spiritedness which helped me enjoy the process of learning in the field. And, of course, the good-looking *pabloromero* bulls, cows and calves who make this thesis what it is.

Introduction

Ojo Calving Field, Partido de Resina estate, November 2014

Zahara and I push forwards, skirting the holm oaks and their thorny undergrowth to follow the fenceline deeper into the field. A rhythmical squelching accompanies our movement, punctuated now and again by the lowing of distant bulls throwing out challenges to one another. Their confrontations are habitual - something about damp mornings like this one brings out the sibling rivalry in the different lots of male animals. It's as if the mist and the dew exist only to accentuate the drama of the bulls' contests. For now they are far away though: remote presences beyond a grey-green screen of foliage and drizzle. We are searching for something else.

The regular swish of Zahara's fly fringe falters as I check her in order to scrutinise a suspicious looking blob of colour half hidden in a hollow off to the left. It's only the bucket though. The same bucket as always. It seems to be in a different place every day, positioned just so as to make my heart leap when I catch a glimpse of it out of the corner of my eyes. It almost fits the profile we are after: a low lying dark mass about a foot across, ensconced in long grass or a dip in the ground. Much like the bucket, the mass is usually motionless, but unlike the bucket it is usually alive; a newborn fighting calf.

The swish of the horse's fringe resumes once we have passed the distraction. It is a regular, reassuring movement that goes with a confident, forward-going step. The vegetation thins as we move ahead and the possibility of encountering a calf fades for the moment. The ground here is open - there is only water interspersed with low banks of sodden grass. After the rain, the places where a cow might hide her newborn offspring are flooded in this corner of the field. The bumps, hollows and clumps of tall grass that I had become familiar with at the beginning of the winter are all of a sudden smoothed over. Today the search for calves feels especially picturesque, abnormally so: horse and man paddling across what felt like genuine *marismas* (marshlands), free of vehicles and buildings, like in the postcards I saw when I first arrived in Seville. The unusual dryness of the autumn had jarred with that image, the first calves had been born in sparse, parched terrain, rather than in a romance of puddles and mist. Wet or dry though, taking the Toyota

instead of the horses out to make the daily rounds of the calving fields was never going to feel or look the same, or indeed end up on a postcard.

In front of us the openness of the field forks into two wide clearings between scant copses. José emerges from the tree line on our left, splashing through the long fingers of water in front of us. His horse jigjogs a little when the mud gets deep, throwing the aging *vaquero* (cowhand) forward in the saddle. We swing round in unspeaking unison, two riders on grey horses a hundred or so metres apart. Zahara and I are still tracing the fenceline, here a single, rustic barrier of barbed wire which marks the edge of the estate. The terrain beyond the fence is drained and bare. It stretches away, neatly ploughed, as far as the enormous agricultural barns visible on the horizon. Invisible levees and ditches make the land on the other side *marismas* only in name.

Turning back to the waterlogged open woodland, a third grey horse and his rider come into view further down the clearing, standing still in contrast to our steady forward movement.

This rider, Joaquín, our foreman *(mayoral)*, is at the hub of the field, while we comb roughly curving lines round him at our respective distances. The hub is busy, populated even, unlike the emptiness of the rim where we squelch onwards. Joaquín is counting the cows and calves who are grouped round the hay racks not far from him. The cattle are a loose body of ribby grey and black animals, some with matching, fine, upright horns, but most with some kind of imperfection: an asymmetrical twist or break. Though thin – because of that long, particularly dry summer and autumn – they are elegant and athletic in shape, with neither the boxy clumsiness of dairy breeds like the Friesian nor the passive robustness of Angus animals, bred for their meat.

Some of the foreman's charges are lying down, others are standing, and still more are moving through the group, confusing his attempts to tally them. Even at a distance I can see that he is frowning, his face lined and pockmarked beyond his thirty odd years. The calves appear and disappear between leg and udder, many of them covered in a coat of juvenile brown fur, which when wet fades into the dark mud of the churned up ground. As a whole, the herd is calm though, making his attempt to check the total number of cows and calves against yesterday's tally difficult, but not impossible. Nonetheless, it is obvious that he is not happy, that there are either cows or calves missing. Otherwise he would be waving us away and out of the field to continue the search for newborns elsewhere.

After moving a few steps I see him start over, glancing down at the notebook held with the reins in his left hand, his right hand hand slightly raised as he fixes briefly on each animal. The cows and calves look back at him, moving away slightly as he encroaches on their space. Two small dogs flit between Joaquín and the herd, their movements causing only small ripples of alarm among the cattle compared to the larger ripples caused by the combination of horse and rider. Distancing himself from the watching mothers and mothers-to-be, Joaquín gestures sharply for us to join him. We abandon our lines and head in toward him, the horses keen as we come together.

The Gravity of the Bulls

This thesis is about the breeding of fighting bulls in Spain. It follows the lifecycle of the animals bred on the Partido de Resina bull-breeding estate (formerly Pablo Romero) near

Seville in Western Andalusia, where I conducted, in total, nearly two years of ethnographic fieldwork. The bulk of the research was carried out in an uninterrupted stint between October, 2013 and January, 2015. This was followed by several shorter return visits while writing up. At its core, the project is thus an ethnography of a particular bull-breeding estate: an attempt to describe the lives of the people and animals who live and work on and around Partido de Resina. In order to render these lives, and the qualities that are central to them, legible from an anthropological perspective, I draw on the anthropologies of human-animal relations, Spain and Europe, complemented with some use of the anthropologies of value and ethics.

Initially, I had set out to look at Doma Vaquera, a Spanish style of horsemanship rooted in the management of bovine livestock ('Doma' coming from *'domar'*, to train/tame; 'Vaquera', to do with cattle). I was interested in what it means – or how it might make sense in this context - to take a horse, with whom one has developed an intimate relationship of trust in the course of extensive training and time spent together, into an arena or field with dangerous animals like fighting bulls. I wanted to explore questions of intimacy, affect, and modernity, with a focus on the close relationship between horse and rider, and the ethics of being a good horseperson in contemporary Spain. This interest in the face-to-face, intersubjective relationship between horse and rider stemmed directly from the recent establishment in anthropology of the idea that animals might productively be included in ethnographic accounts as participants or kinds of subject (see Kirksey & Helmreich 2011; Ogden, Hall & Tanita 2013). Reading about the world of Doma Vaquera and its connection to fighting bulls in the library and online, I found no shortage of photos and words depicting mounted men, and sometimes women, in pristine countryside, riding between the oaks and the olives of the *dehesa*, the silvopastoral form of land use which dominates much of the landscape in rural Spain. There was an abundance of beautifully shot photos of the Partido de Resina animals – *los toros marismeños* or the marshland bulls - who are famous for their good looks. From a distance, this estate (ranch) seemed like the ideal place to do a project focusing on horsemanship, especially given that, through my supervisors, I had a personal connection with the representative of the estate, José Luis **Algora** Cabello, who also turned out to be a taurine and equine veterinarian.

However, when I arrived I found the stables largely empty. There were boxes (stalls) for more than a dozen working horses, but most contained only mouldy hay and rat droppings - only two of the boxes showed any sign of use. Almost all of the saddle racks were empty, or bore piles of decaying tack and baler twine. Joaquín informed me that he did not really consider himself a horseman *(caballista)* like the people who used to work here or those that worked on other estates, even as he tacked up the one old horse he rode to do his job of looking after the bulls. He had had to learn to ride when he became foreman just two years before my arrival, but for him horses, and in particular his horse, were mostly just a tool for work *(una herramienta de trabajo)*, or so he said at that moment. The bulls were the source of his passion for his role as *mayoral* of Partido de Resina. As if to emphasise his point, as we rode out into the fields shortly afterwards and some two year old bulls came into sight, he turned to me and said in all earnestness that these were the most dangerous animals in the world and that he hoped I appreciated the seriousness *(seriedad)* of what we were doing.

With Joaquín's assertion, and with his casual enlisting of me as his underling, the focus of my doctoral research was forcibly shifted toward the animal at the core of the institution at which he works**:** the fighting bull, or more specifically the Partido de Resina fighting bull. The horses I had planned to study were relegated to the supporting cast, part of the assemblage of actors involved in the breeding and raising of fighting cattle, but not on the same level as the protagonist species.

Towards an ethnography of a bull-breeding estate: Opening research questions

What kind of relationships and qualities (cf. Weiss 2016, 8) bring together humans and fighting stock at different stages of the life cycle of fighting animals?

How do the concerns of my informants and the ethnographically salient entities and relationships of my fieldsite speak to anthropology after the “multispecies” turn (Ogden, Hall & Tanita 2013)?

What actors or entities exert “ethical force” on a bull-breeding estate (Faubion 2011, 145)?

Bovine ancestors

Much like Brad Weiss (2016), pulled into the world of human-porcine relations in North Carolina, I also quickly realised that my spotlighting of the bulls put me in good company. Human-bovine relations, too, have been the subject of "legendary anthropological theorizing" (Weiss 2016, IX), particularly in British Social Anthropology: Evans-Pritchard exortation for those who study the Nilotic peoples to *"cherchez la vache"* (1961 [1940], 16) immediately came to mind, as did his positing that, for the Nuer, cattle go beyond economic value, defining vital "links" in their "social processes and relationships", from marriage to segmentary lineage (*ibid* 19). As he concludes, "Their social idiom is a bovine idiom" (*ibid.* 19). Lienhardt, as Evans-Pritchard's student, extended his mentor's earlier reflections, arguing that not only is Dinka thought heavily "orientated towards their herds", but that apparent details, such as the colour configuration of a cow, bear a complex relationship to wider features of the "natural and social environment" and can indeed "form the centre of a whole field of diverse experience, linking one apperception with another" (1961, 10-11). Hutchinson (1999, 5) later took on the task of historicising the relationship of the Nuer with their cattle. Her approach was to trace how new dimensions of Nuer personhood and sociality, such as money, guns, and paper, have redefined contemporary Nuer life precisely through their interactions with bovine livestock, which have held continued, if shifting, importance to the Nuer and neighbouring peoples. In the same vein, I realised that I might productively root my research in the lives and management of the animals in which Joaquín and Algora invest themselves so heavily.

Present on six continents, human-bovine relations inform anthropological work far beyond the Sudan. Harris' (1966) work on the Indian subcontinent led him to instigate the Current Anthropology debate concerning *ahimsa*, "rational" economy, and the role of cattle. Atwood Lawrence's (1982) interpretative analysis of the wild and the tame was based on research undertaken at American Midwest rodeos. Two decades later, Grasseni (2004) described the primacy of "skilled vision" among Northern Italian cattle breeders, while Campbell (2005) explored tensions that arise when Himalayan villagers must care for both kin and water buffalo. Cattle and buffalo of all breeds are large, potentially dangerous animals. They share a range of particularities in terms of how they engage with and apprehend the world, including a nearly 360 degree visual field, high sensitivity to movement, and an acute sense of smell. Dependent on the breed, they may also, of

course, bear horns. They are generally sociable and often highly trainable, affording multiple different ways in which they can share their lives with humans.

Fighting bulls have also been the subject of anthropological work. According to Douglass (1997, 5), interest has increased since the death of General Francisco Franco in 1975 and the concomitant flourishing of anthropological and ethnological work in Spain[1]. Bar Douglass' (1997) wider consideration of "the whole phenomenon of *los toros* [the bulls] in Spain", the focus has been almost exclusively on the bullfight itself; as ritual sacrifice (Pitt-Rivers 1983), as cultural performance (Marvin 1987), and as symbolic interplay of masculinity and femininity, variously theorised (Auraúz de Robles 1978; Caro-Baroja 1984; Corbin & Corbin 1984; Douglass 1997; Pink 1997). Many of these previous "interpretations" have been roundly critiqued by Mitchell (1986) for their alleged disregard for local explanations and cultural ambiguities, as well as chronic oversimplication of a diverse and complex taurine world. Some of the above works could also be critiqued from the perspective of wider debates and issues in the regional literature, particularly in terms of the othering or exoticisation of the European South by scholars from the North (see Moreno Navarrio 1984; Herzfeld 1980 & 1987; also the section on the regional literature below).

My own contribution to the literature on the bulls comes from a different angle. My focus is on the breeding and raising of the bulls themselves, as principally mediated by the figures of the bull-breeder *(ganadero)* and the foreman *(mayoral)*, rather than the bullfighter *(torero)*. Thus it is the institution of the bull-breeding estate *(ganadería de toros bravos)* that grounds my work, rather than the arena, although the two are unambiguously linked and co-dependent from the perspectives of my informants. Above all, this thesis centres the pressing, forceful presence of the bulls, cows, and calves that populate and define the world of the bulls. It is the gravity of these animals that holds the elements of my project and my fieldsite together.

***

1 See Roca & Martín-Diaz (2016) for debate about the role/presence of anthropology in Spain under Franco.

Partido de Resina is a relatively small bull-breeding operation. At the time of writing, it was home to approximately 120 breeding cows, yet its bulls have an illustrious history and are appreciated throughout the bullfighting world, particularly in Madrid and in the South of France. Today, the estate extends just over 500 hectares, a tiny fraction of the land which was available to the founders of this particular subtype of fighting bull: the Pablo Romero family. Although the estate now belongs to a syndicate run by members of the Morales family, who bought the land and the animals in the early 90s, it is the Pablo Romero name that is still associated with the animals. The *pablоromeros,* as the bulls are informally known, are often referred to as *los toros guapos* (the good-looking bulls) due to their combination of small, well-armed heads, low-slung, cylindrical profiles, and the distinctive purple roan (grey) colour *(cárdeno)* of about half of the herd.

Bull-breeding estates *(ganaderias de toros de lidia)* like Partido de Resina can be found in Spain, Southern France, Portugal, and throughout Latin America, and supply bulls and cows for a variety of taurine festivals, including what is known in the anglosphere as the bullfight. Although things are changing, the historical promotion of bullfighting by the Franco regime means that depending who one talks to and where, the bullfight itself sometimes carries more weight and prestige than other kinds of taurine spectacle. This is the case in most of Andalusia, and especially in the West of the autonomous region in the Guadalquivir basin, which is considered a cradle of bull-breeding history. The regime built on the 19th century romantic recasting of the bulls as art, invested heavily in the idea of the bullfight as *la Fiesta Nacional*, the National Celebration, and an especially and profoundly Spanish event (see Andreu 2016, 438). In Spain, bullfights *(corridas de toros:* hereafter *corridas)* typically involve six animals from the same bull-breeding estate, and three *toreros* with their supporting crews *(cuadrillas)* of *banderilleros* and *picadores* (assistants on foot and on horseback respectively). The bulls are taken through a series of acts (see chapters III and V), their behaviour shaped by the movement of capes and bodies, both human and equine, as well as punishments, before being killed in the arena with a sword. As Marvin (2015, 39) points out, from an English-speaking perspective, it is easy to misconstrue *corridas* as a kind of sport or fight, particularly given the ubiquity of the bullfight/bullfighting translation, which does not do justice to the variety of terms used to reference these events. A key concept here is *toreo*, the **art** of bullfighting (2015, *ibid*). The corresponding verb *torear* - literally, to bullfight - conveys much more than 'fight', connoting

play in the sense of skilled manipulation, as well as artfulness or provocation in the face of greater strength.

El mundo de los toros - the world of the bulls – does indeed exist as an actual place, produced and defined through the everyday acts of the *aficionados* and professionals who attend taurine events. So too, is defined by those on the outside, who see *la tauromaquía* - everything associated with fighting bulls - as fundamentally morally wrong. One can enter, and even describe this world as an ethnographic totality in itself[2]. *El mundo taurino*, in all its complexity and with all its component parts, including the bull-breeding industry, is of course also embedded in a wider socio-political context, which I will describe through the Partido de Resina estate and its inhabitants. By way of example, Douglass (1997, 5) highlighted the importance of the bulls when it came to "discourse about significant cultural categories in Spain" during her fieldwork in the latter of half of the 20th century:

> "... taurine formats [spectacles] are use to talk about male/female, urban/rural, national/local, class, and political relationships; hierarchy and equality; history; worldview; and … the construction of the Spanish state and Spain's relationship with Europe."
>
> (*ibid.* 5)

Although our theoretical frameworks and fieldwork experiences are different, Douglass' analysis broadly applies to the bulls in the 21st century in the sense that they remain a touchstone issue in everyday life and in Spanish politics, both in terms of animal rights/ welfare debates and concerns more particular to the Spanish context. From the perspective of my informants on and around the Partido de Resina estate, the rise of Podemos as a vocally anti-taurino force on the left of Spanish politics, the 2010 banning of *corridas* in Catalonia, the subsquent overturning of that ban by the constitituional court in Madrid, and the declaration of *tauromaquía* as Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Spanish state in 2013, all fold into wider issues in contemporary Spain. To participate in the breeding of fighting bulls is to dynamically position oneself, or be positioned, with reference to the Spanish state, regional autonomy, European-ness, and modernity, as well as in terms of class, rurality, and gender. The Partido de Resina animals and their caretakers speak to both these debates, along with internal - although often related -

2 See Marvin 1987 for just such an emic account, from a loosely Geertzian perspective

arguments about what bullfighting and bull-breeding will look like in the future. In this light, the fate, and history, of the *los toros guapos,* the good-looking bulls, tell a larger story, even if they represent just a small fraction – about 160 male animals at any one time – of the total number of fighting bulls in existence.

The fighting bull is a breed *(raza)* in itself. They are not considered domesticated *(domesticados)* or straightforwardly wild *(salvajes/silvestres)*, nor are they domesticated animals which have gone feral *(asilvestrados)*. Within the world of the bulls, they are positioned as distinct from both wild and domesticated cattle, their defining quality as *toros bravos* being their *bravura*, or fierceness. As I will later describe, this fierceness is experienced as a cultivated form of ferocity, innate to the animals and, in that sense, natural, and part of their 'wild' heritage. At the same time, however, it is definitively shaped and expressed through the relationship between bulls and humans; it is a sought after quality which has been carefully cultivated over the generations (see also Marvin 2015, 42-43).

Fighting bulls, as a breed, are divided into principal lineages *(castas)* and subtypes *(encastes)*. Many of these are genetically unique, having been bred in isolation, or with only selective cross-breeding, for decades. Partido de Resina stands out because its animals are some of the few remaining representatives of the Gallardo lineage, making it an outlier in a bullfighting world dominated by animals with Vistahermosa blood: the so called *toros comerciales* favoured by elite bullfighters. It is a member of the *UCTL* (*Uníon de Criadores de Toros de Lidia* - Union of Breeders of Fighting Bulls), the association of breeders which works on behalf of some of the oldest and most prestigious bull-breeding estates in Spain.

The sense of weight and depth conveyed by Partido de Resina as an institution is apparent even in brief descriptions of – or encounters with – the estate. The gravity and presence of the currently animals are compounded bloodlines stretching back to the moment when, in 1885, Felipe de Pablo Romero bought the founding stock of the estate and branded them with his distinctive “mouth of a bread oven” iron *(hierro)*, leaving a mark which the estates animals still bear on the lower right side of their hindquarters (Prieto Garrido 2012). This sense of temporal depth, historical specificity, and hereditary difference invokes the 'genealogical paradigm', described by Bamford and Leach (2009), with echoes of Cassidy's (2002) work, which explores how the breeding of thoroughbred horses in Newmarket, England, entails parallel, co-constitutive notions of blood and kinship between noble families and lineages of great horses. On more than one occasion, it was suggested to me that, much like the Pablo Romero family in the late 19th century, the Morales family who now owned the estate had bought their way into the aristocracy, or at least attempted to do so, by buying the *pabloromero* bulls. That said, the key difference was that by the time the Morales family bought the estate in the early 90s, the *hierro* (the brand) of the estate was well established as an entity with its own momentum and trajectory. According to public commentary and critique, however, this had been heading downwards since the 1960s and 70s heyday of the good-looking bulls, when they were the preferred choice of *figuras* (elite *toreros*) such as 'El Gallo', Ordóñez and Paco Camino (Prieto Garrido, 2012: 168).

Today, the messy, empty stables and the *mayoral’s* unabashed lack of horse knowledge sit awkwardly against the history and prestige associated with the estate. The contrast hints that the experience of breeding of fighting bulls - particularly outlier types like the

Partido de Resina animals - was transformed during the period of rapid economic growth in Spain between 1995 and 2008 - dubbed the “second miracle” - and the subsequent collapse: *la crisis* (Franquesa 2018). Initially, I was worried by the fraying edges and battered installations of the estate, and the evident struggles faced by the men who actually did the work. A combination of valour **and** knowledge – as in the art of *toreo* – felt so central to the world of bulls, but Joaquín was so young, only a couple of years older than myself, and so clearly new to his job. I felt that perhaps I had ended up on the wrong estate, one truly at the end of its tether. Yet it was a mistake to draw such hasty conclusions. As I argue throughout this thesis, the messiness I was faced with in the field, the temporalities of demise and crisis, and the sense of intimacy generated by the small group of men left working full time with the bulls, were to provide methodological opportunities, and open up new research questions and points of intersection with the literature. This was to be the case particularly where my informants worked to tidy up the perceived mess in their lives and expressed hope for a better future for themselves and their bulls.

Theoretical Considerations: Multispecies ethnography and the qualities of the bulls

The concept of multispecies ethnography (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010; Ogden, Hall & Tanita 2013; Locke & Münster 2015) is by now well established in social and cultural anthropology, accompanying a wider 'animal turn' in the social sciences and humanities (Arluke & Sanders 2009; Weil 2010). An acknowledgement of the co-constitutive role of the “diverse entities” that participate in, share, and make the world with humans is now a standard point of departure for anthropological analysis (Long and Moore 2012, 18). All kinds of nonhuman organisms and entities are being foregrounded in ethnographic accounts as posthumanist critiques of the privileging of the human subject in academic writing, and in Euro-American thinking more generally, begin to bite (Haraway 2008; Wolfe 2009). Wherever anthropologists do fieldwork with, and subsequently write about, animals, they now do so within a larger community of academics who share overlapping concerns and a sense of newfound momentum: multispecies ethnography meets Kohn's (2007) “anthropology of life”, meets Ingold's (2013) “anthropology beyond humanity”, meets Haraway's (2008) “companion species” and world-making “response-able” beings.

Partido de Resina is, of course, home to a multispecies population. During my fieldwork there were four humans working full time on the estate, although they were often assisted by helpers (like myself), volunteers, and family members. Beyond these people, in service of the bulls, cows, and young stock of both sexes, there were two working horses, four more-or-less tame steers, and two working dogs. It would be possible to write an ethnography of the estate without reference to the concerns of emergent multispecies literature and the animal turn, but these concerns, particularly the preoccupation with animal interiority (see below), resonate profoundly with the lives of my informants, and with the matrix of human-animal relations that makes up the world of the bulls.

As Ogden, Hall and Tanita put it, "multispecies ethnography is marked by its attentiveness to nonhuman agency" (2013, 16). This focus on agency has taken various forms within anthropology, particularly when it comes to animals that we might easily encounter "in the second person, as a *thou* to my *I*" (Carrithers, Bracken & Emery 2011, 664) - in other words, animals with whom we, as humans, might experience face-to-face, or responsive body-to-body encounters, a category which, I argue, includes fighting bulls. Knight premises his edited volume, Animals in Person, on the notion that we might more productively configure, and indeed recognise, "animals as *parts* of human society rather than just *symbols* for it", that is as kinds of "person" in and of themselves (2005, 1). For Maurstad, Davis, and Cowles, horses might be both ethnographically and analytically "subjects" or "agentive individuals" (2013), while according to Kohn (2007) dogs, jaguars, and humans all constitute perspectively connected "selves" among his Runa informants, and should be taken seriously as such (cf. Viveiros De Castro 1998). More recently, Locke builds on this literature by calling for a wider "methodological inclusion of nonhuman informants as subjective actors and contributing participants in ethnographic research" (2017, 353).

Multispecies trends represent a setting aside of previous ways of dealing with animals in anthropology, which are perhaps most succinctly captured by the longstanding notion that, analytically speaking, animals in anthropology were principally good to eat or count (Shanklin 1985, 5), or "good to think" (Lévi-Strauss 1963, 89); that is, to be used by humans either materially or symbolically. By way of bovine example, Hutchinson (1996, 27) roots her analysis in how cattle, as "media" of "interpersonal bonding" alongside blood and commensality, have declined in importance. In a taurine example, Douglass (199, 5)

discusses how 'the bulls' *(los toros)*, as a “whole phenomenon” have come to symbolise one of the “two Spains”, standing in for a Spanish version of tradition, as opposed to modernity, and inform the ways in which Spanish people think about themselves and their relationship with the rest of the world. In these accounts, animals stand in for social relationships, rather than participate in them.

Ogden, Hall, and Tanita (2013) argue that the increasing traction of animal rights, and welfare activism and philosophy have underlined this shift toward taking animals - as sentient beings - seriously in ethnographic research. Animals are now observed to participate in life as subjects, rather than merely objects, suggesting that “both animal welfare activists and multispecies ethnographers rely on discursive strategies of trans-species recognition” (*ibid*. 8). In ‘Animal Liberation’ (1976), Singer places an emphasis on the recognition that animals have “interests”, such as avoiding pain. Carrithers, Bracken, and Emery draw a connection between this and the work of Regan (1983), who, in ‘The Case for Animal Rights’, asks us to recognise that animals are “subjects to a life.” Subsequently, Carrithers and colleagues argue, it has become rhetorically easy to equate “animal individuals with human individuals” (2011, 665). In what they call the ‘North Atlantic context’, they argue that human individuals, or persons, benefit from the “supercharged argument” of “sacred personhood”, a core tenet of humanism (*ibid.* 663*).* Over the last two centuries, this “moral personhood” has enveloped ever greater parts of humanity, from wealthy, white, male citizens, to “the poor, slaves, women, children, other races,” and now extends to some parts of the animal kingdom (*ibid.* 663).

Yet the inclusion or recognition of animals as participants in life, or as kinds of selves/persons/sentient individuals, is not the sole motivating force behind the multispecies or animal turn. It is not simply a question of “redirection to the study of animals, plants, and other beings, or specific methodological innovations”, but is also about “reconceptualizing what it means to be human” (Ogden, Hall & Tanita 2013, 7). Identifying the collective works of Haraway (e.g. 2008), Latour (e.g. 2005; 2010), and Deleuze and Guattari (e.g. 1987) as key influences on this literature, Ogden, Hall & Tanita suggest that authors working within the context of the animal turn in anthropology are trying to configure humans, animals, and other entities as emergent within “assemblages”, which are “not a mere collection of entities and things, but a complex and dynamic process whereupon the collective's properties exceed their constitutive elements” (*ibid.* 7). The

important point here is that what it means to be human, or animal, within such an assemblage emerges through shifting, contextual processes of relating and "becoming", which are traceable through ethnographic work (*ibid.* 7). Such an approach is perhaps most evident in the work of anthropologists who work with species without faces, such as insects (e.g. Raffles 2010), plants (e.g. Tsing 2010) and diseases (e.g. Nading 2012), in contexts where issues of subjectivity, intentionality, and cognition can be set aside with relative ease.

If I were to approach my fieldsite as an assemblage, then it would be an assemblage centring on the bulls, which, as I will argue, shape and are shaped by the ways in which their humans think about themselves and their world. I will further discuss the shape of my fieldsite below, when I outline my methodological approach, but my point here, following Candea (2010) is that a bifurcation can be identified in the multispecies literature when it comes to defining "what counts as a social relation and who can participate" (2010, 243). We might posit a 'Durkheimian' model of social relations - "relations between subjects, mediated by objects (actual or symbolic)" - and include/recognise animals on that basis, as well as on the basis of advances in the science of animal cognition (*ibid.* 243). Alternatively, we might deploy a more expansive definition of the social (see Latour 2005) as merely the "associations of different entities" (*ibid.* 243). These approaches are not necessarily incompatible - and my principal contribution to the literature is to illustrate precisely this point - but, as Candea (2005) argues, they are not the same (*ibid.* 243), and so there is real potential for slippage between the two.

If we go back to the rolling influence of the particularly Euro-American concept of "sacred personhood" in academic thought, then we can identify another potential issue, also pointed out by Candea (commenting on Carrithers, Bracken & Emery 2011, 675). This time, the issue is that this literature's emphasis on intimate connections between subjects - *sensu* Durkheim - or "authentic, intersubjective relationality" between humans and animals, possesses its own powerful rhetorical force. This may, in turn, background other kinds of social relationship or association, *sensu* Latour. For example, Candea (2010) argues that detachment, just as much as engagement, constitutes a form of relationship, worked on and cultivated by both Kalahari meerkats and the human scientists who observe them. There is then a slight tension between these two entangled strands of thought in

multispecies work in anthropology, with authors perhaps tending to lean one way or the other, depending on the subject (and species quiddity) at hand.

The particularities of my fieldsite call for a theoretical framework which can help draw out the complexity and contextuality of the different aspects of breeding fighting bulls. To do so effectively, this framework must encompass both the emergence of forms of human-animal intersubjectivity, and human-animal relations which appear to escape or exceed such intersubjectivity, such as the role of the bulls in producing Spain as a "disputed category" (Douglass 1997, 6). As Ingold suggests, the best place to start is usually with those who lives and thoughts revolve around the animals at hand, which is what I am setting out to do (2000, 72; see also Argent 2010, 158). The challenge, then, is to attend to both the ethnographic multiplicity of the fighting bull, *el toro bravo,* and its ethnographic singularity: to examine how the bulls and their world "hang together" as a whole entity (see Mol 2002, 54). I need to capture the overbearing individuality of fighting stock exemplars, expressed most visibly and to its fullest extent in the arena, through the **antagonistic intimacy** of *toreo* (bullfighting). Yet I must also account for the undeniable presence of other kinds of human-animal relation, which might not necessarily be most productively analysed with an emphasis on intersubjectivity or animal personhood. As I mentioned above, for example, Partido de Resina as an institution has its own weight and presence; it is a space within and against which my informants, human and animal, are formed and form themselves as subjects (see Tinius 2015). Beyond this, cohorts, *corridas* (understood as groups of bulls destined for a particular *corrida de toros*), and subtypes of fighting bull, as well as the breed in its entirety, all have social lives. That is, they form relations which escape the sum of their component animals and become objects of care in and of themselves from the perspective of bull-breeders (on the latter point, see Harber 2010; Blanchette 2015; Crowder 2015; Wanner 2016).

Alongside these diverse taurine entities, I intend to focus on a set of connected **qualities** which are important in this corner of the world of the bulls. This will enable me to respond the challenge of incorporating animals more fully into social anthropology. It will also facilitate the bringing together of the two strands of the multispecies literature which I have identified above and which underlie the ethnographic description in the chapters that make up this thesis: an attention to the presence, influence and dynamic emergence of animal interiority in the field, and a complementary homing in on kinds of human-animal

relationships that do not privilege face-to-face intersubjectivity. I reveal these connected qualities through descriptions of the relationship between the Partido de Resina bulls and their environing world, focusing on one or two in each chapter. Adapting the approach taken by Weiss (2016) in his analysis of local pork production in North Carolina, I use a focus on qualities to draw attention to the evaluative dimensions of breeding fighting bulls. This form of breeding is, after all, a process of selection, working towards an ideal animal which is not only good-looking, but which also performs well in the arena or on the streets. According to Weiss, foregrounding qualities enables us to "grasp the social … creation of value as embedded in the characteristics of the material world, performed in the course of social interaction, and embodied in the perceptions of the active subject" (2016, 8). Weiss' approach draws directly on Nancy Munn's work 'The Fame of Gawa' (1986) where the character and value of objects are lived through their production and exchange or the phenomenological experience of practices associated with them (*ibid. 8*). In a similar way, I aim to show how some of the defining qualities of the bull-breeding world are embedded in, and made apparent through, the installations, practices, animals, and evaluative perceptions of Joaquín, Algora, and other people involved with Partido de Resina. I see this approach as complementary to Latour's (2010, 5) "matters of concern", whereby objects, entities, concepts, and why not qualities, emergent at the anthropologist's fieldsite become "issues, gatherings, assemblies", pulling in different aspects of the informants' world.

Beyond the value and value-making involved in the bulls and the estate as a whole, my close relationship with Joaquín, the foreman, also allows me to consider wider questions. Specifically, it allows me to consider how the bulls, and the qualities associated with them, form a part of his ambitions to be a particular kind of man, in a context where his skill, bravery, and, above all, his output in terms of fighting stock, are constantly being evaluated, not only by those close to him, but also by those at a greater distance - both on and off social media. For me, there is a link here between the Munn-inspired approach of Weiss (2016), and the anthropology of ethics (see Lambek 2010; Laidlaw 2013) where ethics, or the ethical, can be traced through practice; with judgement, criteria, and positive/negative value walking the world, ethical subjects are formed through action, rather than merely through abstract thought, and made legible through ethnographic description (see also Reed 2017, 166). In light of this, the **qualities** and the kinds of animality - valued and unvalued - which emerge through the practices of bull-breeding and

toreo, could be considered to form part of the ethical field, within which actors like Joaquín and Algora constitute themselves as good people, through or in spite of the perceived critical gaze of the anti-bullfighting lobby and metropolitan Others with very different ideas about animal life and the countryside, which lurk constantly on the edges of my fieldsite. In order to illustrate how the bulls are at once outcome and a method of coordinating (ethical and value-laden) action (Weiss 2016, 274), I need to also bring the regional literature into play.

Theoretical and Ethical Considerations: The regional literature

As I have outlined above, the principal framework I will be using for the description and analysis of the Partido de Resina estate and its inhabitants, human and animal, can be found in the concerns of the literature that has emerged through the 'animal turn' in anthropology, complemented by elements of the anthropologies of value and ethics. However, my fieldsite is in Andalusia, Spain, and that this has consequences in terms of my enfieldment and my situation within anthropology as an international discipline, particularly as a male, British trained, British social anthropologist. The regional literature also bears directly on my attempts to make sense of the lives of those who dwell and work on the estate, particularly Joaquín, who as *conocedor* (another term which describes his role as caretaker of the bulls; literally, one who knows [the bulls)] is in many ways the gatekeeper to the Partido de Resina animals, and with that too the qualities of the bull-breeding world I will be exploring in this thesis.

One of the ways the regional literature complicates my animal-centred approach because, historically, there have been tension between anthropologists coming in from 'outside' *(fuera)*, and those based in the Spanish academy; particularly Seville, in Andalusia, on the doorstep of my fieldsite (Roca & Martín-Diaz 2016, 614). Julian Pitt-Rivers' publishing of The People of the Sierra in 1954 marked a defining point in both British and Andalusian social anthropology. In the case of British anthropology, the book embodies a decisive shift away from studying 'primitive peoples' in Africa in the Oxford tradition. In Spain it marked the beginning of the controversy surrounding the “double colonisation” of Andalusian anthropology (Moreno Navarro 1984; Roca & Martín-Diaz 2016): the first of these ongoing colonisations is a colonisation of the land itself, as non-native anthropologists descend on Andalusian fieldsites, extracted their data, either ignoring local anthropological work or

borrowing from it without credit, and then leave (Moreno Navarro 1984, 84). The second colonisation involves “the mechanical and uncritical application to *our* sociocultural reality of schemes and theories from Anglo schools of anthropology” (*ibid.* 84 [my added emphasis]). Moreno Navarro was particular aggrieved by what was perceived as the formulaic use of functionalist frameworks in Andalusia by outsider anthropologists, presumably in works like The People of the Sierra, although as Gay y Blasco points out, he names no names (commenting on Roca & Martín-Diaz 2016, 624). However, the extent to which local anthropologists can, or rather should, lay claim to the people who live in their vicinity is debatable, especially given the historic role of Sevillan intellectuals in the colonisation of the Americas, and given that it is difficult, or at least not uncomplicated, to delineate “what counts as local” or what counts as a “colonized mindset” when it comes to anthropological theory (Gay y Blasco, commenting on Roca & Martín-Diaz 2016, 624; see also comments from Clua i Fainé *ibid.* and Lins Ribeiro *ibid.*)

The Spanish literature which deals with the bulls and with the themes I find relevant to understanding the socio-political and geographical situation of Partido de Resina in the marshlands southwest of the provincial capital goes well beyond Andalusian and Spanish anthropology. The world of the bulls comes with its own academic literature, anchored by the Fundación de Estudios Taurinos in Seville. This Foundation of Taurine Studies publishes a biannual journal and aims to bring academic rigour to the study of the bulls. According to the remit of the journal, the discipline “studies tauromachy through archeology, anthropology, ethics, law, literature, music, sociology, history, philosophy, art, genetics, and zoology, and, of course, through the fanbase”. It was to this literature I was immediately referred by Algora when I arrived in the field, as well as the legal, regulatory framework that guides his work as a bull-breeder (e.g. Fernández-Figueroa Guerrero & Carrillo Donaire 2006) and the literature of his veterinary profession (Padilla Suárez 2011; Prieto Garrido 2012). I draw on these works as 'embedded sociologies' (see Candea 2010, 20; Latour 2005): detailed, profound, inherently partial accounts of practices and structures which underline and constitute the bull-breeding industry, by professionals working in the world of the bulls.

Returning to the regional literature, there are aspects of the debates generated by the conflict between *anglosajón* anthropologists and Andalusian anthropologists, as well as debates in the wider 'Mediterraneist' (see Herzfeld 1987) and European literatures which I

have found useful in contextualising the lives of those that work on the Partido de Resina estate, particularly in terms of class, masculinity, and forms of sociality. The bêtes noires of twentieth century anthropology that purports to say something about Andalusia or the Mediterranean, including the honour/shame nexus, patronage, and the preoccupation with sexuality, have all helped me think through the social relationships I encountered among the people who care for the bulls.

The back and forth dialogue between Julian Pitt-Rivers and Isidoro Moreno Navarro helped make visible political patronage and egalitarianism as forms of sociality particularly relevant in Andalusia (see Roca and Martín-Diaz 2016, 615-616). This was echoed in the wider Mediterranean, which was emerging as a comparative area in British and North American anthropology at the time (see Banfield 1958; Gellner & Waterbury 1977). In retrospect the development of political patronage as a theme in this literature has been critiqued as a form of 'deficit theory' (Giordano 2012), reliant on an assumption that civil society or the state is not functioning as it should, eliciting a mixture of disapproval and curiosity among Northern anthropologists. In the anthropology of southern Spain, patronage emerged as a theme not only alongside Moreno Navarro's argument that Andalusians in rural towns – the popular classes - subscribed to a form of “ideological egalitarianism” (1984), but also as opposed to the idea of class as an organiser of Andalusian society. This debate has been chronicled by Corbin & Corbin (1984): from Pitt-River's (1984) emphasis of the role of patronage in Grazalema, and de-emphasis of the role of class, to Gilmore (1980) and Martînez-Alier (1971) who they suggest overplay class (all working in very different towns in any case). Corbin & Corbin (*ibid*, 105) also point out that even where patronage is not explicitly invoked, the idea that people rely on a “nexus of personal relations” (Press 1979) or on finding an “in” to access new social context is prevalent in works on Andalusia. This is something which might now be more informally termed *enchufe*, which connotes being plugged-in (to the networks of people that matter).

These debates feed into more recent ethnographic studies of life in Andalusia. Luetchford & Pratt (2011) highlight how post-Franco land occupation by day-workers *(jornaleros)* in Western Andalusia strengthens local political histories, which in turn become entangled with notions of the “self-sustaining *pueblo*”: friends, kin, and neighbours bound together. Although I will not be attempting to reignite these polemics, like Luetchford & Pratt (2011), and Giordano (2012), I am informed by them as I consider the lives of people like Joaquín,

who, as gatekeeper to the bulls, is conscious that he governs access to something which people want. He is also aware that he is young and that his elevation to *mayoral* constituted a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Notions of patronage are particularly relevant given that *padrinazgo* (patronage or protection) has a long history in tauromachy, especially when it comes to the way young bullfighters make their way up the ranks of the *escalafón* (professional hierarchy). The tension between *padrinazgo* and artistic talent in the world of the bulls has been traced by Xavier Andreu right back to the 1830s and the rise – without noble patronage – of Francisco Montes 'Paquiro', to the top of the bullfighting ladder (2016, 428). Montes, in his 1836 book, *Tauromaquia Completa*, ghostwritten by Santos López Pelegrín, marked a shift in emphasis in tauromachy: towards the romantic valorisation of *toreros* and *toros*; towards a 'cleaning up' of the spectacle; and towards positioning tauromachy as an art through which – with sufficient effort, valour, and skill – even the humblest man might lift himself (*ibid.* 429). Both this larger history and Joaquín's current situation create a nexus of tensions, which can precisely be talked about in terms of class difference, egalitarianism, and connection, as they are understood, lived, and negotiated by Joaquín and the people he allows to come into contact with the bulls (as well as the people who bypass him).

On a related note, I do not directly deploy the concept of honour, now widely critiqued as an emblem of the othering, romanticisation, and exoticisation of the Mediterranean (Herzfeld 1980; Giordano 2012). I have chosen not to use the concept in any attempts to draw out the motivations of my informants, particularly as honour was not a word used by anyone I knew. Yet I am interested in how young men like Joaquín, and the people around them, think about good and bad behaviour when it comes to the bulls, and how these concepts fold back into ideas about being a good person *(ser buena persona)*, or as Joaquín put it, simply being a person *(ser persona)*. For Pitt-Rivers (1954), honour was "the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society." The notion of honour aside, this is not so very different from my interest in being a good person/man/horseman on Partido de Resina, and in the immediate vicinity. As I will show in Chapter II this can be tied to *toreo*, and the balance between valour, skill, and showing-off/posturing (*protagonismo/postureo)*. Following the development of the anthropology of ethics, and its underlining of the lived, everyday practice of ethics, my emphasis diverges from that of Pitt-Rivers, as I focus on the dynamism and circumstantiality of being a good person, rather than on the idea of a fixed system of value. As Gay y Blasco suggests, we

must account for the strong presence of moral imperatives in the lives of our informants, yet we must also show how people engage with these reified ideals “in ways that are neither monolithic nor predictable” (2011, 445). As with the anthropology of ethics, my emphasis is on the material, dynamic and everyday aspects of values in the lives of my informants, so if there is an echo of Pitt-River’s honour in my thesis it is present with the same emphasis.

Andalusian anthropology has branched out and away from a focus on essential characteristics of the region's inhabitants, although the idea of a particular Andalusian-ness still exerts influence, especially with regard to “popular culture”: working class culture (see Cruces Roldán 2009; Moreno Navarro 1997). However, there has also been a move towards a focus on forms of sociality in the region and the rural and urban spaces within which these forms are constituted (Cruces Roldán 2009: Del Corral & Palenzuela 2017). The way land is used and understood has come to the fore, particularly with regard to ideas of nature and ecology (Talego, del Río & Coca 2016). These works, as well as works that deal with themes that emerge across the thesis, such as Alcalde Sánchez (2016) on tattoos, or Mancha Castro (2017) on the history of national-Catholic values near my fieldsite, provide context and help further draw out the qualities, concerns and diverse taurine entities which run through this corner of the world of bull breeding.

Fieldsite and Methodology

There are two principal reasons why I began this introduction in the mud and the rain on the Partido de Resina estate with Joaquín, José, Zahara, the other horses, and the dogs, as we stalked among the oaks and the olives looking for the next generation of fighting bulls and cows. The first reason is that I wanted the **romance** of the fighting bulls and their breeding to be front and centre from the very beginning; a romance echoed by the heroic (albeit red-faced and faintly embarrassed), literary impulses of my own participatory emphasis in fieldwork and practical apprenticeship to Joaquín, as one of his irregular *vaqueros* (stockmen). The second reason is that, in terms of both fieldwork and writing style, this kind of material – that is, close description of the *faenas* (tasks) of the taurine countryside – forms the core of my thesis.

I invoke romance here because, as Millán & Cruz Romeo (2004), Cruces-Roldán (2009), and Xavier Andreu (2016) all suggest, many aspects of life in Spain today can be productively contextualised by situating them in relation to the turmoils of the nineteenth century, as much as the twentieth. Of particular relevance is the relationship between liberal Spanish intellectuals and northern European commentators like Byron, Mérimée, and Gautier. These were the first to describe bullfighting in romantic terms of authenticity of character. This perspective in turn conferred "literary dignity" on the bulls and made them an acceptable feature of Spanish romanticism, having previously been seen by this group as a barbaric relic which held back the progress of liberal Spain (Andreu 2016, 424). The ambivalent views of foreign and internal commentators who linked the bulls with primitivism would later be problematized as misunderstandings of the phenomenon, despite their lauding of the institution's authenticity. This was particularly the case in the lead up to the publication of *Tauromaquia Completa* in 1836, and the wider reforming of the bulls around notions of art, aesthetic purity, and the triumph of reason over uncontrolled force (*ibid*. 425).

For a subset of Spanish intellectuals in the mid-nineteenth century the bulls thus became compatible with ideas of a modern, civilised Spain (*ibid.* 425). Although the influence of Spanish romanticism has waxed and waned since the nineteenth century, the idea that the bulls are focal points of art, authenticity, and truth endure. So too endures the importance of the felt gaze of the outside commentator, which now, partially at least, takes the guise of the figure of the metropolitan antitaurino. Indeed, despite the restauration of the monarchy and the fightback of the Catholic Church in the latter half of the nineteenth century, romanticism had gained a foothold in Spain. This was especially the case in Andalucia, which played host to a contemporary movement towards studying folklore (Cruces-Roldán 2009, 154). Even though the history of folklore studies in Andalucia is complex, it can be tied to the emergence of a strong regional idea of "popular culture" (*ibid.*). This popular culture is a felt, much venerated presence among the erudite *aficionados* I met in the towns around Partido de Resina, who use it to directly link the bulls, Doma Vaquera horsemanship, 'flamenco culture', and Catholic pilgrimage.

The postcard-worthy, marshland landscape of Partido de Resina reinforces the romance of *el campo bravo* (the country of the fighting bulls), and which thus provides crucial starting point for this thesis. It is this romance which (re)presents and structures how my

informants imagine the world of the bulls: what counts, and what does not. Romance of course entails a writing-in of certain aspects of reality, and a writing-out of others. It is inherently discursive in character, and of course dynamic and contextual. The qualities which glue together the Partido de Resina estate are worked upon, and made real and natural through traceable practices, which in turn inform the subject positions of people, like Joaquín, and like myself, who enter into this world. The *pabloromero* animals are usually right at the centre of these practices – as intersubjective participants in complex relationships, or as larger (or smaller) entities, such as herds or bits of taurine bodies. Their centrality is the reason they are foregrounded in my work. My emphasis on the practical things that happens to these animals is precisely to show how the romance and mystique of this landscape and its inhabitants are encoded in – or rather, negotiated through – these activities.

As I have made clear above, my fieldwork was located on the bull-breeding estate Partido de Resina. The name itself formerly referred only to the *finca* (ranch/farm), the actual bit of land which the estate occupies. Since the sale of the Pablo Romero, however, the name Partido de Resina has been used to refer not only to the land but also to the estate as a whole, which includes the line of bulls, their brand-mark, antiquity, and insignia. I have chosen to translate *ganadería* as bull-breeding estate, rather than ranch, because I feel that it better connotes the genealogical and aristocratic dimensions of the industry and the ownership of land in Andalucia. Rooting my fieldwork on one estate was a deliberate choice. I might have spread my efforts over various estates in the area, but I was compelled by the singularity of Partido de Resina as an institution in itself. In this sense Partido de Resina constitutes an 'arbitrary location' for fieldwork: that is, a “purposefully myopic approach” (Candea 2010: 36), chosen to best position myself in order to describe how the estate comes into being as a locally imagined ethnographic totality or whole, which in turn forms part of the wider geography of the world of the bulls. In treating Partido de Resina as an institution I follow Tinius (2015, 72), who, taking inspiration from Born (1995), Faubion (2001), and MacIntyre (1981), opts to consider artistic institutions as traditions. The intended effect is to reveal them as fields within which internal and external values (or qualities) come together or are negotiated. It is not that my informants passed into Partido de Resina and became particular kinds of subject as a result, but rather that the estate provides an enduring context – grounded in the bulls – for reflexive (often ethical) subject formation.

Of course Joaquín and my other informants participate in other lives as well, which I do not entirely exclude from my description. The local towns, Villamanrique de la Condesa in particular, with their gyms and bars; the nearby site of pilgrimage in El Rocío, with the beach at Matalascañas not much further down the road; and the discos and all-you-can-eat oriental buffets in the outskirts Sevilla thirty minutes down the road – all these locations also inform my research and the lives of the people involved in the bulls.

Returning to my concern with the close description of seemingly mundane activities like searching for newborn calves: from the perspective of my desk, the hours spent on horseback on the estate have come to constitute the imaginative heart of the research process for this project. All the places and people I will describe in the subsequent chapters radiate out from a set of encounters between myself, the estate staff (my principal informants), and the Partido de Resina animals. These encounters often took place in enclosures like the one mentioned above in the introductory vignette. If encounters in fields such as Ojo constitute the heart of my doctoral research, it is because in these moments I was able to directly engage with the main ethnographic objects of my fieldsite: the Partido de Resina institution and animal as experienced by their day to day caretakers. Riding along the bounds of the estate and searching for the calves – which are quite literally the future of the estate – are both activities which constitute work done in the making of this particular corner of the world of the bulls. Such encounters are partial; they take place within and between particular contexts and at the intersection of different experiences, narratives, and histories. Yet, as I mentioned above, they are also weighty in terms of world making: they form a big part of the daily lived reality of Joaquín, while also coming into dialogue with others' expectations and images of his role as *mayoral*, a fact of which he is acutely aware.

Working with fighting stock (*ganado bravo*) requires alertness. A sense of risk or danger underlies almost every task which directly involves these animals, whether they be male or female, and consequentially underlies this thesis. However, as I have tried to convey above, working with fighting stock also affords a sense of space, an openness that allows for periods of self-reflection, as well as conversation with others – the latter sometimes more contemplative, sometimes more profane. For both myself and my key informants, especially Joaquín, much of what went on in our lives during my fieldwork was processed

in the fields of the estate, mainly on horseback, but also in the estate Toyota (land cruiser) or on the tractor - both alone and in company. The content of my chapters focuses on key days or events, often action-packed, but I also try to show how, for the men with whom I worked closely on the Partido de Resina estate, these events are bookended by long, often repetitive days spent in the fields with the stock involved. And while much of the meaning-making activity appears to be concentrated and contained in events (birth, hot branding, testing, exercise, bullfights, veterinary interventions, and death), in terms of investment of time in the field, in this case the days spent in the fields are much more numerous than the days where events took place, and offer us a different lens through which to consider the world of the bulls. Consequently, the data I present is the product of a combination of moments in which our attention was fully consumed by the animals we were with, and the task at hand. And also the moments when space and distance from the exigent presence of the stock allowed us to reflect more widely, and allowed elements from our lives beyond the bulls to slip in and form a part of the conversation. Of course, these spaces are still, in some sense, always oriented toward the bulls, as when Zahara and I worked our way through the trees with just each other for company, or in the moments when Joaquín – in contradistinction to his focused, brusque attitude above – proved suddenly talkative when we were alone.

Thesis structure

The tagging and identifying of newborn calves also represents the beginning of the life cycle of fighting cattle. It is this which will structure this thesis, with each chapter focusing on a specific event or period in the bull-breeding calendar and from there drawing out the qualities and concerns which inform the lives of my informants and those of the bulls.

In the first chapter, I continue the story I began above, focusing on the inherent unpredictability, doubt, and uncertainty of both the search for newborn calves and the wider situation of bull-breeding in twenty-first century Andalucia after the financial crisis. This sense of uncertainty quickly comes to rest on the tensions between person and office, as Joaquín struggles with his role as foreman to the Partido de Resina animals.

In my second chapter, I home in on the annual event of the *herradero*, when year old male and female animals are branded by young men from the local towns. Here the focus is on

toreo as a value: the combination of skill and valour that is rooted in handing the ferocity of fighting stock. I juxtapose the *herradero* with Joaquin's use of social media and the idea that such events constitute forms of sociality where competitive egalitarianism is worked through as young men handle the stock.

Chapter III covers the testing of three year old cows in the estate arena, where genealogical notions of *selección* and *casta* (class, caste, type) are foregrounded in the assessment of the animals for breeding suitability. We are introduced to the idea that the bulls, cows, and calves coalesce into larger entities such as cohorts and *encastes* (sub-types).

In Chapter IV, I consider the development of the young bulls into mature stock and how their changing sociality effects their care. Here we reprise the concerns of Joaquín as *mayoral*, with a focus on horsemanship among the bulls and among pilgrims.

Chapter V represents the apogee of the lifecycle of the bulls: the actual bullfight. Here I expand on Chapter III and how the antagonistic intimacy of the relationship between *torero* and bull draws on and is informed by a close understanding of taurine behaviour and interiority. This in turn shapes and is shaped by wider ideas about the future of particular kinds of fighting bull.

Chapter VI looks more closely at the different objects of care on the estate, with an emphasis on veterinary intervention and modernisation. Here my focus is on revisiting and bringing together some of the qualities and diverse taurine entities I describe in the preceding chapters. The context is the screening of fighting livestock for Tuberculosis.

The concluding chapter VII looks at notions of life and death on the estate. To bring the thesis to a close I dwell briefly on my juxtaposition of different romantic narratives of the bulls, revisit my research questions and consider once more what the diverse entities and qualities I found to be most salient in my ethnography have to say to the anthropology of human-animal relations.

*All photos taken by author.

Chapter I - Becoming foreman to fighting stock: The (un)certainties of office in the fields

"...El que te daba consejos
Mientras las leñas ardían
A galopar el caballo
A dar el punto a la cincha
A conocer el ganao´
y hasta a curar una herida
La templaza en el embarque
Y velar por tu corrida
Llevar dentro de las venas
La gloria de tu divisa
La humildad que dan los campos
Andar derecho en la vida
Que no se rompa la historia
Que siga la llama viva..."

"...The one who gave you tips,
While the logs burned,
Cantering your horse,
Tightening the girth just right,
Getting to know the stock,
And even treating an injury.
Calmness when embarking,
And watching over your bulls,
Carrying in your veins,
The glory of your colours,
The humility given to you by the fields.
Walking upright in life,
So the story doesn't break,
So the flame stays alive..."

"Foreman" ("Mayoral") by José Leon, translated by author.

Ojo Calving Field, Partido de Resina Estate, November

“The light roan over there looks like she has given birth.” Joaquín tells us when we draw close, indicating a cow with uneven horns who does look empty compared to the other, fuller animals around her. Yesterday her vaginal opening had seemed a grade more swollen and Joaquín had commented that she was probably going to calve soon.

The back end of this particular cow has indeed changed shape quite dramatically overnight. Today it is more knurly than distended, and there is also something visceral hanging down beneath her tail. My eyes do not spot these things as fast as the eyes of the other men do. Joaquín takes his role as a kind of mentor to me very seriously, and is constantly telling me that I needed to have ***“más vista”***; that I need to **see** more when we are with the animals. José, in turn, relishes explaining to me in front of Joaquín what we need to look for and where: “Look at her pussy (*chocho*)!” With an impertinent twinkle in his eye, he uses the most vulgar vocabulary possible, aiming directly at my evident embarrassment. Humour aside, this is not knowledge easily acquired. The trailing bits of afterbirth are an immediate giveaway; the shades of change in the genitalia of the animals less so. Once, I had asked if it was dangerous to leave it hanging like that. Joaquín had responded at length, telling me that it was not as if you could just walk up to the animal and clean her up like you might with tame breeds of cow (*vacas mansas*). He had said that you would either have to take the whole herd into the corrals and crushes, or knock her out with a tranquiliser, which would entail not only a lot of extra work but also real risk and stress for the animals themselves. This was the whole point of keeping and breeding fighting stock with as little human interference as possible: the cows did it all themselves and were just fine, he said. They did not need to be mollycoddled through the whole process. They gave birth the natural way: slipping away from the herd in the night or in the early morning to calve in a private spot they had already chosen and often used year after year.

“Màs vista.” he repeated, tapping his head.

The scene before us is not as pretty as the ponded zone of grass and trees from which we have just come. The cow in question stands anxiously among the others in a muddy mess

of wet straw next to the hayracks, which have definitely seen better days. She is a clear, blue-grey roan (*una cardena clara*), a relatively light colour which means we are able to read the number 222 branded above her ribs on her right side without any problem. Joaquín juggles reins, cigarette, and notebook as he checks to see whether or not he has registered a calf from her yet. Scanning the animals, there is no sign of a newborn in the herd. All the calves that are visible have yellow ear tags, ridiculously big on their tiny ears. If there is a new calf somewhere, it will most likely be hidden away from the herd.

José interrupts to point to the cow, saying with a little frustration: “Look at her, look where she is looking over there. It's obvious that she has that she has given birth recently and that the calf will be somewhere over that way!”

Joaquín takes his time with his notes, only acknowledging the comment with a brief glance up at us and the herd. His ignoring of José's advice is routine. It is reflective of a deeper tension between them, but this does not boil over into open anger. It is just us three out here, and so I suspect he does not feel the need, or the temptation, to put his older, arguably more experienced assistant in his place. *Crotalizando* or *poniendo crotales* – that is, tagging the calves – is not Joaquín's favourite task. It is a job which stretches right through winter, becoming part of the daily routine. We have to keep up with the births, otherwise the calves get too big, too fast, and too independent for their mothers to be identified. As *mayoral*, Joaquín has to record the *crotal* (eartag) number of each calf and its parentage so that this information can then be passed onto Algora, his boss, and then to both *la junta*, the regional administration, and *la union*, the breed association (UCTL). Joaquín is not only supposed to be the *conocedor* (knower) of the bulls in general, but is also the *ahijador* (from *ahijar:* to adopt, but in this context to match mother and calf) – the one who knows the cows specifically: their identification, their names, and their parentage.

Joaquín has changed his system since last year. When he was new and enthusiastic in his office, he had carefully laid out the pages of his notebook like a spreadsheet, which detailed both the branded number and the ear tag number of every single cow in the four different calving groups as well as their names, and left a space for the ear tag number of new calves and their sex. This year he has opted to jot down the details under their respective field headings as the cows gave birth. The new system means he occasionally has to refer back to last year's notes in order to find the numbers of the cows that have not

yet given birth. These notes live in the little bag he wears over his shoulder, which sits incongruously metrosexual next to the workaday nature of the horses' tack, Joaquín's overalls, and the stoic rusticity of José's cheque shirt. I wonder if the new system means he is getting to know *(conocer)* more of the cows and so no longer needs the support of a hand drawn spreadsheet. Perhaps he is more confident now, and trusts his knowledge and memory just as the *mayorales* did before the advent of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy and the subsequent rolling out of European Union-wide systems of identification and control in 1997 ((CE) 820/97) and 1998 (Real Decreto 1980/1998). Or perhaps he had just been in a rush when the first calf of the season was born and had not managed to plan out his notebook properly, leaving him struggling against the tide of newborns, who have to be registered monthly.

Sometimes the notes get left behind in the estate buildings or the Toyota, but this time everything that is supposed to be is in the bag, and Joaquín confirms that, according to his notes, number 222 has not yet had a calf registered. Now we just have to find the little *becerro*, which we assume must have been born overnight. We set off in the direction previously indicated by José, although of course Joaquín does not thank him or otherwise acknowledge his contribution. The cow follows our progress with nervous eyes as José explains to me how one might trick the mothers into giving away the location of their calves by circling them at a distance and noting where they look or in which direction they step when pressured. He says a good *vaquero* can get a cow to sing (*cantar*), in the sense of squeal under interrogation, despite her best efforts to conceal the position of her calf.

We still do not know the exact location of the missing calf so, as we put distance between us and the herd, we spread out slightly, picking our way through the trees, keeping track of each other and our respective lines by watching for flashes of grey horse and flat capped rider at the edge of our vision. A trail of smoke tracks Joaquín, whose cigarette consumption goes up during the stressful jobs. It’s now just after nine in the morning and he is already well into a packet. José is easily picked out on my other side thanks to his mount, who keeps breaking into dance, dishing his front legs out to the side and making his rider look elderly and uncomfortable. His horse today is Pegaso, though we refer to him as *el caballo blanco*, the white horse. He is one of the new ones. Bandolero, José's own horse, is a good walker in comparison: better trained.

Looking back, I see number 222 start briefly after us, but she thinks better of it and chooses to stay with the herd. This makes things much easier. It's always alarming to have a loose cow trotting about, and we prefer to avoid a confrontation by finding the newborn animal alone and well away from the mother. At first I had not quite believed it when Joaquín told me that *vacas bravas* (fighting cows) were just as fierce as their male counterparts, and not only in defence of their calves, which is the case for most cattle breeds. These cows are also proven fierce in the arena, where, at about three years old, they are tested for their *bravura*, the quality of cultivated ferocity which defines the breed, and which is understood to be in large part hereditary.

Joaquín spots the calf. He definitely has an eye for it. Hissing quietly, he points out the wet blob of dark brown fur, hidden ineffectually behind a scraggy thistle. We have just crossed a wide clearing and bank, and are now on the edge of another copse. The herd is a good couple of hundred metres away, just visible through the trees over the way.

"Is she coming? Is the mother coming? Don't let her get here/reach me (*llegar*)!"

He moves round the back of the *becerro*, who lies still as if fixed to the ground, trying hard not to be seen. Dismounting, he is on top of the animal in an instant, leaving his horse, Cabezón (big-headed/stubborn one), standing right above, the reins draped casually round his neck. Joaquín uses his left hand to cover the calf's muzzle, which stops it calling out to its mother. With the other hand, he applies a punch-like tool to fit the first set of ear tags. The second set of tags materialises from somewhere - his pockets or his mouth, I am not sure - and they are fitted smoothly and without fuss, the calf completely still in his hands: compliant for now. Joaquin lifts the animal's leg as he stands up, checking its sex with a familiar glance. The cigarette has not moved from his mouth. He relaxes a bit as he sees us standing alert between him and the distant trees where the herd lurks beyond. There is no lone cow hurrying across the clearing to save her calf from the intruders.

"It's a female. Crotal number 9565. Take a note."

I fumble for my own notebook, jammed into my sodden jean pockets with a now leaking pen. Part of me wishes I had my own little bag, although a *vaquera* style saddle-blanket

with in-built pouches would be even better. José has one of the latter, marked with his initials.

As Joaquín moves back to his horse, the *becerro* suddenly lurches to its feet, charging at his knees with all the conviction of an adult fighting animal but just a fraction of the force. She accompanies her charge with an infantile bellow, as if she is only just registering the pain caused by the piercing of her ears. The calf's cry is shrill and pathetic when compared to the intermittent lowing of the far away adult males. The foreman half laughs as he swings up into his saddle, which he does with a hopping movement in order to accommodate Cabezón's fidgeting as the horse tries to avoid the confused young animal between his legs.

Once a newborn calf has been tagged and its sex identified, the next step is to confirm which cow is its mother. It is very possible that among all the cows back at the hayracks there is another cow that had just given birth, and that somewhere out in the field there is

another calf hidden in the dewy brush. The mother needs to reclaim her calf in order for us to be reasonably certain that she is indeed the parent. The foreman's mistake here could, in theory, resonate through future generations, skewing all the careful selection work done by him in collaboration with Algora, who is in charge of breeding decisions.

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Through the close description of the central task of tagging and identifying newborn fighting calves, the quality of the world of the bulls that I want to draw out in this chapter is that of *oficio* (office or profession). In particular, my interest lies in the office of *mayoral* as it is experienced by Joaquín and as it is distributed through the relationships which form the social world in which he inheres – that is, the institution-tradition of Partido de Resina. Below, I lay out the story of Joaquín's promotion to *mayoral*, as well as some of the wider context, but the key elements of my understanding of *oficio* can be found by the reader in the events which took place in the calving fields, just as they were made apparent to me in this way during my time assisting him on the estate. I privilege this space, and its role in the making of Joaquín-as-*mayoral,* partly because, for me, the fields were where the tensions and qualities inherent in his professional position became most visible, in effect distributed across parties both human and animal, points of the landscape, and actions. But I also foreground this space because I feel that the fields provide a good opportunity to explore how, rather than a conflict between person and office, Joaquín's situation can be productively framed in terms of a wider reconstitution of office being lived out through human-animal encounters. My approach responds to the recent anthropological move to reconsider the role of 'office' in the constitution of ethical, or in this case responsible, subjects (du Gay 2008; Strathern 2009; Reed 2017), as well as a shift towards foregrounding the importance of everyday encounters, action, and materiality in opening up spaces for ethical reflexivity (Keane 2014; Corsín-Jiménez 2015). The space here is affectively charged, as Joaquín's anxieties about doing his job well are compounded by anxieties particular to the unpredictable, difficult task of tagging calves; a task which is potentially dangerous not only due to the risk of human or animal injury, but also due to the risk of him getting things wrong and incorrectly registering a newborn's parentage.

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Walking back to the trees in loose formation, at first the youngster trots forlornly along behind us. Then all of a sudden she takes off at an angle, running at full tilt in a ruler straight line toward the nearby double fence that separates this field from the next. We watch her go, hoping she will turn and make for the herd and her mother. Instead, she gallops on blindly through puddles and wet grass, until she eventually hits the fence at an angle, glancing off it rather than going through it, which she might well have done had she hit it square on. She continues down the fence line, running into it again and again. It is an eerily mechanical movement to watch. When the calves run off like this they remind me of players in a computer game suffering from a lagging connection: they slide headlong along an imaginary line, unresponsive to – and out of synch with – the surrounding environment, bouncing off walls or going through them. It was not something José or Joaquín could or would explain to me beyond the default “es así” (that's how it is). Algora's books helped a bit. He had given me one on taurine ethology, learning, and behaviour, which he had handed to me when I had first arrived, as if to say ‘here, you're an academic, read this and now go and learn the practical stuff with the foreman.’ The book was written by his friend and fellow vet, Padilla Suárez, who acknowledges that, in fighting stock, the conflict between fight and flight behaviours can seem especially pronounced. As I had witnessed, the same animal might in one moment appear improbably, insanely brave, but in the next, for whatever reason, that animal might break off and flee, completely unresponsive to further stimuli. For Padilla Suárez, the crucial point is that, in fighting stock, this flight is not a sign of *mansedumbre* (tameness/docility), but rather just indicative of conflicting, superimposed patterns of motor behaviour (2011, 38).

In her confused, non-responsive state, number 9565's line is going in the wrong direction: away from the herd. Joaquín responds, cantering a wide semi-circle to cut her off, intercepting her as she gets her head through the fence at a point where a bush blocks her path. He jumps down and scoops her up before she can turn on him, and then arranges her, as she kicks and protests loudly, over Cabezón's neck, just in front of the saddle. Not completely trusting us to warn him, he keeps looking over his shoulder to check there is no mother cow crashing toward him. Once on board, he rearranges the calf so that her front and back legs stretch down on either side of the saddle, like his. This allows him to easily control her with one elbow pinning her flanks to the front of the saddle, leaving his left hand free for the reins and his right hand free to cover the animal's mouth. He finds a moment to wipe his shit covered hands on his overalls with disgust, the yellow excrement

of newborn calves being particularly vile. A cigarette persists stubbornly between his lips throughout.

“The females complain more, the males are always calmer on the horse.”

We laugh as we move off in the direction of the herd. The comment does ring true: in the last few days we have seen a series of feisty female calves compared with a series of relatively docile males. It is not that the females are not supposed to be aggressive, but rather that the males will one day, hopefully, be the epitome of taurine aggression. It is what they are bred for. Maybe the males are just waiting for their moment. It is also just funny that the females do not like being manhandled – there are human comparisons to be drawn here, although those comparisons do not have to be articulated fully in order to draw laughter.

Once we are in the herd's line of sight and we have their attention – at a distance of about a hundred metres – Joaquín lowers the calf carefully to the ground. Half-covering his own mouth, he calls the mother over by imitating the cry of a lost calf. He repeats the noise several times, scanning all the cows for a reaction, but focusing on the suspected mother, number 222. The cow does not immediately volunteer a clear response but simply looks up, like the rest of her herd-mates, at which point José also throws-in an effort. Then, all of a sudden, the cow sees her calf wandering between us and her companions and hurries over, calling out as she goes. There is a brief reunion in the neutral space between the two groups as the mother checks over her offspring, before the pair head off at a tangent.

“A good mother”, comments José. “She's taking her calf away to hide her somewhere safe.”

Joaquín fills in his notebook, not needing to ask me for the tag number, the sex, or the mother's number after all. This part of the paperwork done, and with the stock all checked, we then skirt the herd and make our way to the gate of the field via the water filled ruts left by the hay tractor. At the crossroads between the four calving fields, we pause as the foreman chooses which field to tackle next. The drizzle and mist have given way to sunshine and I am sweating in my jacket. The air still smells wet and earthy, but it is rapidly drying up.

Joaquín makes a decision and we file through the gate as he holds it open for us.

Mayoral

The breeding of fighting bulls is a cyclical, yet also cumulative process. Each new generation builds on preceding generations, year on year, but the life cycle of the core animal of a bull-breeding estate, the fighting bull, lasts for between five and six years, depending on whether the animal goes to the arena as a *cuatreño* (four year old) or *cinqueño* (five year old). The estate as a whole keeps moving forward through time, but with every year there are a series of new beginnings, as well as endings, which punctuate both *la temporada*, the bullfighting season, which in Spain lasts roughly from March to October, and the off-season, which coincides with the height of the bullfighting calendar in the Americas. Each year, a new batch of animals is conceived on the estate; another batch is born, becoming *becerros* (calves); another cohort becomes *añojos* and *añojas* (male and female yearlings) weaned, separated into sex groups, and branded; another lot still becomes *erales* and *eralas* (two year olds); at three years old, the females become *vacas* (cows) and the males become *utreros* or *novillos*, eligible to be fought by the junior rank of bullfighters, *los novilleros*; and finally, at four years old the males come of age and are *toros* or mature bulls.

Every time a new calf is born, it is situated within this life cycle and also within the overall trajectory and purpose of the estate. Joaquín and others would repeat again and again that each of the little bundles of fur and cute ferocity were born to go to the arena, or to the streets, as fighting animals. They are always first and foremost fighting stock, not to be confused or even compared with other cattle: they are categorically different. Tameness or meekness are often figured as anmalous or unrepresentative, and fierceness as being in the nature of these animals, whether it be in scientific literature about the bulls, written by taurine veterinarians, or whether it be in the words of my companion *vaqueros*. Given this perceived exclusivity, the search for newborn calves is not just about tagging and identification, which would be the case for any breed of bovine livestock within the European Union. It also matters in ways specific to the breeding of fighting bulls, and to the responsibilities of the *mayorales* who do this work, or supervise it. As the relatively young foreman to the Partido de Resina animals, the responsibility of his office *(oficio)*

weighed particularly heavily on Joaquín *("me pesa la responsibilidad de mi trabajo")*. Despite his competence and his ability to smoothly handle fractious *becerros*, his daily encounters with the animals in his care are replete with anxieties, interpersonal tensions, and limits. He also experiences a mixture of trust and distrust (*confianza* and *desconfianza*) as he interacts with the stock, with different publics, and with those above and below him in the estate hierarchy. Two configurations of the office of *mayoral* emerge – the old and the new – reflecting broader tensions, as the actual state of bull-breeding is continually measured up against imagined, idealised pasts. As the man who put his trust in Joaquín, Algora, puts it, "Now the foremen are not those we imagined with wide-brimmed hat and short jacket. Now the lads too [as well as the bulls] are more modern." Yet both kinds of *mayoral* – *los modernos* and *los de antes* (the ones from before) – walk the twenty-first century fields alongside one another, traceable through ethnographic description and deployed in the everyday micropolitics of working life.

The *mayoral*[3] is not quite as celebrated in the taurine literature as the figure of the aristocratic *ganadero* or bull-breeder (I got a funny look when I went to the taurine studies library in Seville and asked for books and articles about foremen). Nonetheless, this office – the head of the *vaqueros,* who cares for the bulls – still carries significant weight in the world of the bulls, particularly among the working men and women of the towns *(pueblos)* around Partido de Resina. In her foreword to the 2008 edition of Fernández Salcedo's *Los Cuentos del Viejo Mayoral – Tales of the Old Foreman* – first published in 1950, Paloma Fernández Torres tells that, historically, the voice of the *vaqueros* has been absent in print, drowned out by bull-breeders, aficionados, *apoderados* (patrons of *toreros*)*,* and of course the *toreros* themselves (Fernández Salcedo 2008, 10). As an ethnography of a bull-breeding estate, one of the contributions of this thesis is thus to tackle this gap in the literature when it comes to the *mayorales.* The voice of the particular old foreman who features in *Los Cuentos del Viejo Mayoral* is cordial, marked by wit, sarcasm, and local expressions; that of the kind of man who would have dished out advice to his grandsons

3 I am translating mayoral and conocedor as 'foreman', which I feel adequately captures the working class and masculine connotations of the office, often passed down from generation to generation, as was the case with the previous mayorales to the pabloromero bulls. However, like foreman, the term mayoral can also be used to describe foremen/overseers in workplaces which do not involve livestock. One thing of which I am not sure is whether 'foreman' adequately captures the mystique and romance associated with the figure of the mayoral de toros bravos. These qualities are perhaps better captured in English by the words 'head herdsman' or 'head shepherd' – terms which imply time spent with, and knowledge of, animals – and the reader should bear in mind the human-animal intimacy implicit in my use of the chosen term.

by the fireplace. In the book, he speaks of a different time, for he was *mayoral* to the Martínez bulls from 1897 to 1933 (*ibid.*), but the figure of the *mayoral* as rustic, hard-working gatekeeper to the bulls endures, echoing down the years to inform Joaquín's taking up of the office just two years before my arrival in the field. Fernández Salcedo's old foreman is wryly aware of the expectations people have of him as keeper of the secrets of the taurine countryside. Mindful that these expectations remain firmly in place today, in this chapter I focus less on the content of the foreman's knowledge and more on the way the knowledge and office of *mayoral* are configured, evaluated, and contested in practice. Here, then I examine Joaquín's efforts to consolidate his appointment to the job, which, in his own words, has now become his life, and what he wants to do until he dies.

Joaquín did not always want to be a foreman, or even to work with the bulls. His family were not avid followers of tauromachy, although growing up in the town of Villamanrique de la Condesa, six kilometres down the road from Partido de Resina, there was a general appreciation of bullfighting and pride in the local bull-breeding estates. As a child, he had wanted to be a firefighter, he told me, and then a psychologist. Her remembers that when he finished school in the late 90s "there was work" *("habia trabajo")*: you could choose what you wanted to do. This was the period that anthropologist Jaume Franquesa has labelled *"el segundo milago"* – the second miracle – referring to the economic boom which Spain experienced from 1995 until the 2008 financial crisis (Franquesa, forthcoming 2018). This second miracle represented a new economic acceleration, characterised by speculative real estate construction, cheap credit, and rapidly growing demand. It followed the distant, but not forgotten, first miracle which took place during the 60s, and was rooted in a rising generation of government technocrats and state investment in infrastructure and tourism (*ibid.*; see also Franquesa 2016, 74). So when Joaquín, or any of the other young people I spent time with in the field, said *"no hay trabajo"* ("there's no work"), or when they referred to *"la crisis"* more generally, they were doing so having come of age in a time when there was an abundance of work and opportunities.

This sense of choice and possibility was even experienced by people from the most marginalised neighbourhood in Villamanrique, where Joaquín's family lives, and whose occupants are frequently associated with drugs and crime (by Joaquín himself, as well as the other villagers who hold themselves apart from this part of town). The area was unofficially known as *Los Pitufos* (Smurfs), because the houses all resemble one another

like in the animated series. Returning home to his family after his first day of work on the Partido de Resina estate, Joaquín recalls saying to his mother *"Mamá, no quiero volver"* ("Mum, I don't want to go back"). He had had a horrible time, having been bullied and shouted at by the *vaqueros* and then the *mayoral*, many of them the foreman's kin and most from Sanlúcar la Mayor, a town close to Seville. His boss was a third generation *mayoral*, a man who had grown up with the bulls. Despite Joaquín's pride, he was well aware that he ought to appear profoundly ignorant in all matters taurine in such company. And yet, the next day he went back, enduring the mean comments and back-breaking work shovelling feed and mending fences, and, in his words, *"cogiendo afición poco a poco"*, catching the bug, the passion for the bulls bit by bit. With that *afición* (in this context, passion and amateur level involvement), came knowledge (indeed *afición* connotes a certain amount of knowledge), gleaned in the corrals and from hours spent watching YouTube footage of *corridas de toros*, learning what makes a good bull. He did this basic manual work as a nobody –*"el último mono"* (literally "the last monkey") – for over a decade. Then, in 2011 the relationship between the owners of the estate, Algora, and the former *mayoral* fell apart, and, overnight, Joaquín was asked if he wanted to take up the office. This represented a huge opportunity for him, something he had not even dared to dream about: *conocedor* of Partido de Resina, the person closest to the good-looking *pabloromeros*.

For Algora, Joaquín also represented an opportunity: hiring him avoided the complications that can occur when a new personality is brought into a team. Even though he does not own it, Algora is effectively the bull-breeder *(ganadero)* at Partido de Resina. *Ganaderos* and *mayorales* are in many ways set up for conflict, especially given their different yet overlapping spheres of responsibility. The arrival of a new *mayoral* from outside would mean that Algora had to negotiate a new relationship with someone who might not like his approach to bull-breeding. Publicly, on camera for a taurine documentary, Algora placed emphasis on the *afición* which Joaquín clearly has for the bulls, but above all his will and capacity to work. This stood in contrast to others who critiqued his horsemanship and relative inexperience, as well as his humble background.

The enduring – and, arguably, increasing – importance of the figure of the *mayoral* contrasts with a wider narrative of decline and loss of knowledge when it comes to *los oficios* – the offices or professions – of the taurine countryside, and of rural working life

more generally. The question of countryside 'offices' in Andalucia is thought of, both ethnographically and analytically, in terms of techniques and knowledge *(saberes)*, and also in terms of norms and values (del Corral & Palenzuela 2017, 62). The crucial notion here is transmission, with interest focused on the incorporation of elements ranging from the ability to 'read' the countryside *(leer el campo)* to the notion of equality among men or women in the hunting field (see del Corral & Palenzuela 2017, 62). In the case of *mayorales* what is at stake is their ability to read the cows, and the way the animals inhabit the landscape of the calving fields, in order to discern where they have hidden their calves. This form of vision is also layered with in local notions of correct professional hierarchy. During my fieldwork, the general narrative was one of *oficios perdidos*, lost offices/professions and of the feeling that this loss put pressure on Joaquín as *mayoral*. According to this history, the roles of each *vaquero* used to be more specialised, so, for example, on each bull-breeding estate there would have been a *cabestrero* in charge of the training and handling of the *cabestros* or *bueyes* (tame/trained steers used to manoeuvre fighting stock). People that used to work on the Partido de Resina estate, and on other estates, told me that these roles were supported by a wider cast of skilled workers, often including a resident horse trainer, as well as others who focused on the more profane tasks of feeding the stock or fixing fences.

Resonating with and intensifying this narrative of loss and decline was the figure of *la crisis*: a stubborn refrain that criss-crossed talk across the marshland, through El Rocío and Villamanrique to the Southwest and the North, through the Aljarafe to Seville, and beyond, to areas of Andalusia and wider Spain. On my fleeting trips further afield – to Navarra, Malága, and Madrid, following the bulls – *la crisis* travelled with us, present in conversations about ticket sales (were they bouncing back?), in talk of employment, and in the pointed, knowing questions about how things were going *"allí abajo"* (down there, in the South, where things were assumed to be worse). The timing of Joaquín's promotion was not coincidental, coming as it did in 2011, while Spain was in still in full crisis and owners of rural properties were looking for ways to cut costs.

Beyond the crisis, the loss of professional jobs in the working countryside is tied to a longer history of the mechanisation of agriculture, rural-urban migration, and a general *"informalización"* or *"flexibilización"* of labour and reduction in salaried, stable jobs (Moreno Navarro 1997, 12-13; Molinero Hernando 2006). Concomitantly, these larger processes

notwithstanding, there has been a partial professionalisation of the rural workforce in some sectors, including, to a limited extent, in the bull-breeding industry. Some agricultural colleges now offer year-long courses titled, for example, *"Auxiliar de mayoral de reses de lidia"*, that is "Fighting-stock foreman's assistant". There are also now at least two associations of *mayorales*, both founded in the last fifteen years, which purport to defend and promote the profession. When discussing the culture of rural associations, *(asociacionismo)* which has come about since legal changes in the seventies, Del Corral and Palenzuela highlight the fact that a core task of such associations is precisely to "dignify" *(dignificar)* the figure of the relevant office (2017, 62). Joaquín's new post is one of the few salaried positions left on the estate and yet in some ways he has less qualifications for the position than the students at agricultural colleges.

From Joaquín's perspective, the downsizing of personnel on the estate has led to a collapsing in on him – as *mayoral* - of all the work which was previously shared out. The crisis, combined with trends in rural employment, has led to profound change the Partido de Resina's workforce, which has reduced by more than half in the last decade. Only Joaquín (unqualified apart from his years on the estate), Algora, Moisés, and Mercedes now work full time, aided occasionally by *vaqueros* paid a day rate, but mostly by volunteers like myself and other local *aficionados* who both want to help the estate and to be closer to the bulls and the way of life built around them. Algora is both the representative of the estate and a veterinarian. Moisés does the routine feeding of the fighting stock, a task which, during most of my fieldwork, was mechanised, involving a large mixing and dispensing trailer. He also does what maintenance work he can fit in around the feeding. Mercedes, Moisés' wife, looks after the estate *cortijo*, the country house at its heart. Moisés and Mercedes are much older than Joaquín and work a more regular schedule. The *mayoral* is not seen as a dispensable role in the raising of fighting bulls. Unlike that of the *cabestrero*, it is a profession in demand: *un oficio sin paro*, an office without unemployment. For Joaquín though, this simply means he has a double load of responsibility: not only is he in charge of the mundane upkeep of the estate, but, in his capacity as *conocedor*, he is also charged with knowing the stock, something which takes a great deal of time and which I will return to below. On top of this, it falls to Joaquín to organise the informal labour he needs in order to carry out the bigger jobs on the estate, or to assist him with routine jobs like the tagging of calves over the winter.

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Eucalipto is a much smaller field than Ojo and is more central too, with no fences that mark the edge of the estate. It is named for the line of Eucalyptus trees that run along one side, bordering the main track that runs from the estate buildings. Unlike Ojo, it has more wild olive trees than holm oaks, giving a less dense, more savannah-like feel. Eucalipto shares borders with the enclosures that contain the two and three year old male animals, which are much more open. As we enter the field, we spread out once more, though we all angle towards the herd which is clustered around another set of hayracks in the distance. We pass number 53, the one Joaquín calls the silly cow *(la vaca tonta)* and José calls the solitary cow *(la vaca solitaria)*. She always grazes off on her own in one particular corner of the field, and has become a familiar, slightly bizarre feature in a landscape populated by groups of animals, rather than individuals. The *eralas* (two year old cows) are in here too, forming their own skittish group within the larger herd of cows and calves. They stream off to the right upon our approach, leaving the older cows lurching to their feet in shock.

All three of us spot the new mother immediately. Way off to the left, she is alone but for a wobbly, spindly-legged thing at her feet. Even from a distance, we are sure the calf does not have any tags. It is too small. The *eralas* have made the whole field nervous by running off, and the mother cannot seem to decide whether or not to rejoin the herd with her calf or attempt to hide it. The whole situation suddenly feels chaotic, there is stock all over the place. The two year old *machos* (males) in the next field are also showing an interest, and the three year olds who happen to be near the fence on the far side are lowing enthusiastically across the track.

We are already moving to put ourselves between the cow and the herd. This is completely different to the situation with cow number 222 earlier this morning. We can be sure which animal is the mother, but in order to tag and identify the calf we need to separate her from it. Left too many days, it will become difficult to separate and handle the calf. Moreover, after ten days or so the calf will rarely be alone, as their mothers tend to stop hiding them and the young animals form small bands with their cohort siblings. With three of us to cope with what will surely be a dynamic situation, we might as well give it a go. We can always try again later if she proves difficult.

Thinking back to the previous year, we would not have even been doing this task on horseback. Joaquín had been very new to the foreman role, and had been more comfortable doing it in the battered but still serviceable Toyota. Nonetheless, he had not been so comfortable about the photos appearing on my blog when the vehicle was involved. It was *"feo"* (ugly) – in both an aesthetic sense and as a way of doing things. It was not how things should be done, yet, as Joaquín had emphasised at the time, it did work. Getting the job done had been the most important thing to him back then, and considerations of style – while important – were secondary. And in terms of getting the job, done we made bagging and tagging calves in the Toyota an art form. It was something we were quite proud of, and we took photos and videos, although these were shared only among ourselves. The cows would be cut from the herd and then driven away from the calf by means of honks and shouts. Whoever was closest to the calf would then leap out, run it down, and haul it back to the vehicle before the mother returned. If the mother was really defensive and would not leave the calf even when chased by the 4x4, the calf could often be grabbed from the passenger side while she was busy attacking the driver's side, or vice versa. Once inside the Toyota, the calf generally held still in the footwell while we tagged it and checked its genitals. Joaquín would smile at whoever had the calf when they got covered in mud or poo and say "now you're really working!"

No doubt, things might have got horribly wrong with the 4x4; doors could have been torn off their hinges if left open at the wrong moment and glass and fighting stock are far from an ideal combination. But this year, as we sit on our horses, we seem far more exposed. The new mother in the Eucalipto –black, with curled in horns and striking white eyelashes – is standing defensively in front of her calf. Our horses stop before we draw them up, more able than us to infer from the cows current stance where the edge of her personal space ends. We could pass without fuss scant metres away from the cattle if we were moving them from behind, but encouraging the horses to confront a fighting cow head on requires a little extra motivation from the rider. From a relatively safe distance – as judged by Cabezón, Joaquín's older horse – the three of us attempt to intimidate eye-lash cow by yelling and waving our arms. She lunges forward, sending us scattering. Not a first time mother, she is wise enough not to chase us too far in blind rage, and she immediately returns to her calf, giving us no opportunity to split them up. I can see Joaquín weighing up the options. Maybe we will end up in the Toyota.

Soon, Joaquín signals us to back off a little bit. He gets Cabezón to move in closer, and resumes shouting and cursing at the cow, attempting to provoke her, with his horse half-turned ready to gallop off at the first sign of a charge. The other cows are still haring about in the background, sweeping back around towards our end of the field. The mother is not giving her full attention to Joaquín and Cabezón; she drives them off but will not be lured away. We can see that she is aware of the position of the herd. There is an impasse, until suddenly she makes a break for it, the calf in tow. We pounce, pushing both animals hard now they are moving. The calf get left behind and Joaquín peels off, shouting at us not to let the cow come back under any circumstances.

“Nor the others!! Keep them all away!”

We push curly eye-lashes until we reach the herd. The two year olds flee immediately, but the cows and calves stop for the lowing mother, a couple rushing out to meet her, others gathering up their own offspring. We stop too. Waiting. I glance back and see Joaquín wheeling round and round trying to pick up the confused calf at his horse’s feet without risking dismounting. Eventually he gets a grip and manages to silence the calf quickly. On horseback, two hands are not enough when one has to tag a struggling calf, particularly when the mother might return at any moment and there is only so much anyone can do to actually stop her. The weather, the world beyond the fences; all else is forgotten. Joaquín is with the calf, his mind half on the mother who he knows is attached to the baby, but who he cannot see for the distance and the trees. I am with the mother, the herd merely a backdrop – all my focus on her. José is with the larger group of animals, edging to the right to try and stop them from curving round towards Joaquín and panicking his horse with the calf still aboard.

It all goes to pieces.

Joaquín cannot cover the mouth of the calf as he reaches for the second set of tags, and it calls out. The infant is a good two hundred metres away but the mother does not hesitate to respond. I am not quick enough to get in front of her and she half-loops around Zahara and I, making a beeline for Joaquín. José is too far away to do anything. We try to head her off, we shout and push from the side, from a little bit in front, but she knows exactly where she needs to be and ignores us. I can no longer see Joaquín, my only focus is the

cow and the need to change her direction or stop her. The trees are little adjustments of the reins, their branches a fleeting whipping sensation. I am shouting something. José and Joaquín are probably shouting something too, but I am not in a place to listen.

We come crashing into a little clearing and there is the bewildered calf. It is on its own. There is no immediate sign of Joaquín.

"¡Ya está Robin!" ("That's it!")

I hear laughter from off to the right and Joaquín calls me over. José is already at his side.

"I'm going to eat something, we'll check this lot again tomorrow. The mother was the one with the white eye-lashes no? We'll check her number tomorrow. Write it all down. The tag was 9566 and it was another female."

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A Normal Person with a Unique Job

Joaquín's work, and by extension my fieldwork, involved mainly men. Yet while the majority of people who work in the bull-breeding estates are male, there are female bull-breeders, *mayorales* and cowhands, as well as female bullfighters. These women are often widely celebrated in the media, with relatively high profiles online and in print, precisely because they offer an easy counterpoint to a perceived backwardness in terms of diversity, and to an always negatively imagined culture of *machismo* in the working countryside and indeed in the world of the bulls. Pink (1997, 203) also makes this point with regard to female bullfighters and industry professionals, as do del Corral and Palenzuela (2017, 61) with regard to the gradual inclusion of women in Andalusian hunting societies. With Pink (1997, 35), and unlike Gilmore (1987) I am not interested in outlining a particularly Andalusian model of masculinity, but rather simply argue that whether positive or negative, moral figures or figurings of masculinity or femininity – and arguably also class or rurality – matter here: scurrilous jokes among groups of close friends or work companions in the surrounding *pueblos* (male or female), such as José's joyful use of *chocho* (fanny) above, or his comments about women not liking being handled clumsily; the urban invocation of the spectre of *machismo* to denigrate the perceived lack of

educación (manners or upbringing) or poor *condiciones* (class, social position, or nature) of people from the *pueblos*; or indeed those from one *pueblo* criticising those of another, or those from a particular neighbourhood such as Joaquín's *Los Pitufos*. These things – masculinities and femininities, manners and morals *(modales)*, perceived social positions - matter in the sense that they are "strongly present" on the ethical horizons of my informants, even if they are not necessarily best conceived of as a rigid, culturally specific set of guidelines for behaviour or for the ranking of people (see Gay y Blasco 2011, 458). Regardless of how individuals respond to moral expectations and positionings, the key thing here is that these expectations and positionings are felt keenly, as they are encountered in practice and in conversation, eliciting some kind of response and shaping how people act. This sense of being seen through moralising eyes bears directly on Joaquín's accession to the position of *mayoral*.

If the bull-breeder *(ganadero)* – who is often also the owner – is charged with the overall management of the estate, including negotiating with the plaza *emprasarios* who buy the bulls, with and other human actors, the foreman is charged, in turn, with the care of the stock and their preparation (feeding and exercising, not training) for the arena. Implicit in this office are a set of skills; horsemanship, a close understanding of taurine behaviour and needs, an intimate knowledge of individual animals and their lineages *(conocer los toros)*, and above all *vista*. The latter here refers both to the ability to see in potentially dangerous, rapidly unfolding situations, and to the ability to see the bigger picture – what needs to be done, or what is or is not important. Joaquín fell short in all of these areas when he started at Partido de Resina, but had to pick them up quickly and, at times, publicly. On his first day as *mayoral,* he had to mount-up and lead the separation of a group of mature bulls into lots. For those close to the estate, whether through family, friendship, or *afición*, this *faena* (task) – *el apartado* (see chapter IV) – is a spectacle in itself, and so Joaquín had to take up the role of *mayoral* in front of others from the very beginning.

At the risk of over-enthusiastically generalising this sense of being seen and being judged, and its formative role in Joaquín's taking up of the office of *mayoral,* I draw attention to Isidoro Moreno Navarro's (1984) arguement that popular Andalusian culture – read working-class Andalusian culture - is characterised by an enduring sense of distrust of the "foreign and unknown" and a strong fear of "humiliation". These, Moreno Navarro

suggests, are rooted in historical collective experiences of oppression and marginalisation, such as the successive instances of state expropriation *(desamortización)* and the sale of public land in the 19th century. In Andalusia, these changes led to increases in the already-high levels of inequality, and to the concentration of land ownership in the hands of the newly landed classes (Moreno Navarro 1984, 97; Bernal 1997; Solana Ruiz 2000, 2; see also Cruces-Roldán 2009, 155). These larger processes can be linked to the experience of working-class families like Joaquín's. In fact, even the Pablo Romero family's 1885 acquisition of the founding bulls of the estate can be situated in this history, as they rose to prominence precisely through a dramatic expansion of their agricultural holdings via their buying up of church land (Viard 2011, 49). The *marismas* – the marshlands at the mouth of the Guadalquivir where Partido de Resina is located – also saw dramatic changes in land ownership over the 20th century, particularly when, during the civil war, the Nationalist regime in Seville ordered that the *marismas* greatly increase their rice output, in essence to become the rice basket of Spain (González Arteaga 2005, 60). This process saw the area receive agricultural investment which made it categorically distinct in terms of intensity of cultivation and relative wealth compared to the rest of Andalusia, and indeed much of rural Spain (*ibid.* 64). González Arteaga suggests this was effectively an act of colonisation, with buyers from outside the area not only purchasing land, but completely regearing the local economy towards rice cultivation (*ibid.* 63). The concomitant increase in intensive orange, peach, and olive cultivation saw several small bull-breeding operations pushed out of the area, leaving only Partido de Resina, and the neighbouring Hermanos Campos Peña estate. After an initial period in the 50s where there was exploitation of local labour, some of the bigger rice businesses sold off smaller tracts of land *(parcelas)* to families in the surrounding towns, producing a second tier of inequality (*ibid.*). Joaquín's family – as he pointed out in September, when all our usual helpers were away picking their olives – were not in a position to buy even a small patch of land. José, frustatedly subordinate to Joaquín on the estate, has his own little *finca* or piece of land, where he grows olives and breeds horses and fighting cockerels.

With this knowledge, the image of Joaquín patrolling the fields at the edge of the estate looking for newborn fighting calves takes on new significance. So do statements made by Joaquín, such as “I'm the only one in my family with a salary,” and his suggestions that the bulls have lifted him up into a distinct category of people *(gente)*, a class of person he calls *'profesional'*. Even with the constantly present menace unemployment, and the threat of

him being “put out onto the street” if the estate were to change hands or his handling of the bulls was called into question, and even though his family might not have any olive trees, right now – through him and his privileged but fragile position at foreman – they have recently become better situated in the patchwork geography of different kinds of land use and employment in the area.

Across the fence from the lightly wooded pasture in the Ojo enclosure is a very different kind of landscape: a denuded expanse of intensely exploited agricultural land. The few men that work this land are skilled machinists and mechanics working long hours and six day weeks; they are the ones who have managed to hang onto their jobs. In the distance sit the barns of the rice farms bordering the Guadalquivir. Around the corner, beyond the dense brush that screens the spring *(ojo)* which gives the field its name, there are orange trees, picked in the winter by seasonal labourers. Beyond these, across the road, a huge new American fruit producer, which brings new hope of permanent local employment. Partido de Resina is an island among tracts of arable farmland and both large and small scale commercial and private orange, peach and olive plantations. Further South, beyond the horticultural and agricultural land is the beginning of the Doñana National Park, which stretches all the way to the sea and encompasses marsh, pine and dune biomes, offering a different kind of employment in the tourism and park management industries for people with the right qualifications.

Joaquín, grumpy up on his stubborn horse, Cabezón, sits high in relation to the surrounding landscape. For him, the opportunity Algora gave to him in 2011 has been life-changing; a salaried, formal position is a precious commodity, particularly in light of his humble *(humilde)* background and the sense of betrayal his generation felt when the crisis took away the previous abundance of work and opportunities (Franquesa 2016, 74). However, as I have indicated above, his is a demanding office, and his elevation to the position makes him visible: exposed on multiple fronts. Taurine journalists, documentary makers (the bulls in the countryside regularly feature on taurine television), and anthropologists like myself want access to him as an imagined and actual custodian of the secrets of the countryside. At the same time, there are many among his peers and elders in the local towns with greater experience in some or all of the different elements which comprise the expected expertise of the foreman to fighting-bulls. These onlookers pick apart his performance, or at least make him feel that he is being watched, or judged.

“Lo que dice Juan de Pedro dice más de Juan que de Pedro” (“What Juan says about Pedro says more about Juan than about Pedro”) [Joaquín on Instagram 09/11/2017]

In light of this double feeling of scrutiny, the micro-interactions in the calving fields make fuller sense, as tensions inherent in his office, as well as tensions in his own life, pull Joaquín in different directions. He is assailed by the presence of his team-members, José, and myself, each bringing their own pressures; by the pressing feeling of responsibility imposed by the need to produce accurate records for Algora, the agricultural department of the the regional government, and the UCTL; and by the exigent presence of the *vacas* themselves, with their delicate, uncertain offspring. The latter being the future of his job, and of the estate, incarnate.

It is not all bad however, there are aspects of the attention his role brings which he likes. He knows that there is something extraordinary about his profession and that people follow him with both envious and admiring eyes. He seems himself as a normal kind of person – *“gente normal”* – living an exceptional life. His Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts all are predicated on the position his office gives him in relation to the bulls, from which he has fabricated a degree of stardom and his own adoring public. It is to this aspect which I turn in the next chapter.

Chapter II – Herradero: The branding of fighting stock and the making of young men

"Se perdieron los secretos
de los viejos mayorales.
Los que ligaban garrochas
en tentaderos de erales.
Cosían los botos y cinchas,
gobernaban los cencerros.
Y en recoldos de boñigas
se calentaban los hierros..."

“Lost were the secrets
of the old foremen.
Those who tied the lances
in the testing of the two year olds.
They sewed up the boots and girths,
directed the steers with their bells.
And in the embers of dried manure
the branding irons were heated...”

“Lost were the secrets” (“Se perdieron los secretos”)
by José León, tranlated by author.

Eucalipto track, Partido de Resina Estate, September

Calf 9565 and her birth in early winter last year have long since been forgotten. We might have encountered her today while we were bringing the herds in, but if she was there she would have only presented herself to us fleetingly; a glimpse of stubby horns, charming eyes, and sweat-matted fur among all the others. What colour had she been? A dark brown I think. So she was probably pretty much black now. Their coats changed so much during their first year. She would not stand out physically. Perhaps she had been one of the difficult ones, hanging back in the main corral alleyway, refusing to be separated *(apartado)* from her mother and the other fully grown cows for the upcoming *herradero*; the event where she would be marked with the brands that formally incorporate her as part of the wider herd *(camada)* of Partido de Resina fighting animals. She might have been on the receiving end of a prod from above with a warped metal lance, as I tried to separate the yearlings from the cows, Joaquín shouting from the sorting chute for us to hurry up. That was all over now. 9565 will be with her fellow yearlings, *destetada* (weaned), in a field on the opposite side of the estate from the four calving fields. The shape of her herd will feel different, for her and for us, a large group of yearlings tending to bunch and mill at the slightest threat, much harder to move than when they were with their mothers. The relationships within a cohort are markedly different, constituting a form of immature, peer-to-peer sociality alienated from the temporal depth which exists in groups of older or mixed aged animals. Having gone from four herds to one, they are suddenly visible as a single unit and generation: the collective result of a year's worth of labour and care.

Joaquín and I are returning from the fields, riding down the tree-lined track that marks the boundary between the Eucalipto enclosure – where I had so nearly messed up and allowed a cow to get to him last year – and the enclosures that contained the older youngstock. It was here we stopped back in February to take a photo that has stuck in my memory ever since. Joaquín had a new tattoo and wanted to make it public. Most importantly, he wanted to make it clear that this was no *"normal"* or *"commercial"* tattoo, like the others he and many of his peers from the *pueblos* have: it was the Partido de Resina[4] estate brand, plainly visible on the inside of his left wrist. The photo, subsequently uploaded on social media, helped make him into that *mayoral* – the one who had branded

4 Formerly Pablo Romero

himself just like the stock he was charged with looking after. Marking himself with ink rather than fire[5] was obviously not as painful, but from Joaquín's perspective there was a clear overlap.

> "I too am feeling what a PABLO ROMERO feels when they brand him"
>
> @juakymorera 8th February 2014

We had paused just outside the shade of the trees at Joaquín's request, frustrating the horses who were anticipating the end of the morning's work and their subsequent turn-out time in the paddock. There, after several tries, we had taken a photo of the tattoo in question, which I had subsequently passed to Joaquín so he could upload it to twitter (this was before he had Instagram):

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Hot-branding (branding with a hot iron) is standard practice in the world of the bulls and the *herradero* – the event where each new generation of yearlings is branded – is a fixture of the taurine calendar. There are now other, pain-free ways of marking livestock – freeze marking, for example. But, like other ritualised aspects of the day of the *herradero*, branding with hot irons is considered an important elements of taurine and countryside tradition in the Andalusia I encountered during my fieldwork. Most people I spoke with knew of freeze-marking, but for them it was a practice from the *anglosajón* world; one which might have penetrated the taurine countryside in the Americas, but one which the Andalusian – and, by extension, Spanish – world of the bulls had resisted. Here, the *herradero* is often referred to as a *fiesta campera* (a country celebration) and as one of the key *faenas del campo bravo* (tasks of the taurine countryside).

As an anthropologist, my presence at branding events was immediately understood by all the different kinds of participants. For veterinarians, well-off friends of the boss, and Joaquín's kin alike, this was the definition of rural culture in this part of Andalusia – *las marismas del Guadalquivir* (the marshlands of the Guadalquivir) – an area perceived by locals as the cradle of bull-breeding and bullfighting culture. For me, branding events were

5 Marcar a fuego is another way of saying 'to brand' (herrar).

an opportunity to watch all the different human actors involved with the estate interacting in a small place around the back of the estate buildings. Class, gender, working sociality, concepts of tradition, and above all the figure of the estate brand-mark and the chaotic presence of the yearling stock, all crushed together in the corrals. As Mitchell (1986) has pointed out, “the bullfight-event” – and, I would argue, events like the *herradero* as well – “is complex enough to generate an almost unlimited number of cultural and psychological resonances” (1986, 407). Here, I will focus on the key quality of *toreo*, the elusive mixture of dexterity and courage evinced in the handling of fighting stock, while also giving the reader an overview of the event as it was experienced through my fieldwork.

In this chapter, I juxtapose Joaquín's choice to mark himself with the estate brand with a close description of the way we handled the yearling animals on branding days, as well as some broader descriptions of the sequence of events which structures these days. On the face of it, placing the foreman's tattoo and its reception alongside the branding of youngstock in this text might seem a bit crude, or even just too obvious to afford any analytical insight. But, as I will argue, the fleeting comparison which Joaquín makes in the above tweet – between his own subjective experience of receiving the mark of the estate and the experience of his *becerros* under hot iron – bears further ethnographic scrutiny: it offers a window into how events like the *herradero* constitute messy, dynamic, incorporative spaces, where the people involved are visibly positioned in the world of the bulls. These are spaces which form, and are formed by, both the institutional inertia of the Partido de Resina, and the experiences of the men and women who have more recently come to inhabit this estate. The latter include Joaquín, his peers, and his family, but also – since the selling of the estate – Algora and the owning Morales family.

Building on the recent research of Andalusian anthropologists Cruces-Roldán (2009) and de Corral & Palenzuela (2017) – who work, respectively, on flamenco and hunting traditions in the region – I want to consider the *herradero* as a space within which a particular form of sociality is constituted. In particular, I want to approach it as a space in which certain values – in this case loosely linked to Moreno Navarro's “ideological egalitarianism” (1984) – are made apparent, and in the process remade, as young men and women from the *pueblos* handle fighting stock under the eyes of the bull-breeder, veterinarians, and the owning family. Following Pedroso de Lima’s (2000) suggestion, I treat the continuative and reproductive aspects of this social space as processes of

constitution. In the case of the *herradero*, this means treating the weight and enduring character of tradition as it is experienced – and the class and gender relationships which are reproduced – as the dynamic product "of men and men and women moved by their will, feelings and ambitions" (*ibid*, 32). Complementing this approach, and given the ritualistic[6], incorporative nature of the *herradero*, I also want to emphasise how Joaquín and the other protagonists in this chapter come to this event as the products of their own histories; structures of knowing through which they (and I) make sense of the *herradero* (Toren 2006, 187).

In this chapter, I also try to show how the branding event, and the values reconstituted therein, involve animals as both mute bearers of the estate's history and violently assertive partners in the making of young men and women. This chapter, then, not only makes a substantial contribution to the overall argument of this thesis, but it also responds to current issues surrounding the incorporation of animals into anthropology. As is further explained below, the quality of *toreo* is a constant tension between skill and bravery. Focusing on *toreo* allows me to take this approach because it is a quality that not only becomes most visible when humans and fighting stock interact, but also one that links to wider issues in the making of (good) persons in this part of the world; issues which bear directly on anxieties about modernity and the emergence of social media. These matters of concern include *'postureo',* understood here as posing, or trying to be something one is not; trying – usually, but not exclusively, online – to show how one fits into other peoples' notions of the good life. Also among these concerns is *'protagonismo'*, understood here as showing off, or an eagerness for public attention more generally. The emphasis, in this case, is more on standing out, rather than fitting in. Standing out is, after all, an integral part of the role of the *torero*, yet it is not without its own related tensions and potential to go too far. For many of the people I spoke to in the field – both those who are part of the world of the bulls and those who are peripheral to it or, in principal, against everything it stands for – Joaquín's tattoo falls squarely into the (problematic) categories of *postureo* and possibly even *protagonismo* gone too far. For others, Algora included, it is just part of who Joaquín is and not something which should necessarily be couched in negative terms.

6 Newcomers are often 'blooded' on their faces after they participate in the branding.

Throughout this chapter, I am concerned with the weighty visibility of the brand-mark of the estate: its material presence on the walls of the estate, on clothes and badges, on the tips of the hot irons, and on the skin of the foreman and his taurine charges. What follows is an account of how things are done at Partido de Resina, but branding is generally done when the youngstock are about a year old, well after they have been weaned from their mothers, and when they are big and fleshy enough to take the marks. For both male and female fighting stock, there are four key brands, all on the right-hand side. The males, and sometimes the females, receive ear markings *(señales)* specific to the *ganadería*. In the case of Partido de Resina, these are the removal of the lower-outside quarter of the right ear *(rabisaco)* and, in the left ear, a straight cut in from the tip end *(hendido/rajada)* and a small, rounded notch cut out on the bottom *(muesca)*. The four brands are explained below:

The shoulder bears the year of branding. So those who participate in a *herradero* in 2013 are marked with a '13' and are referred to as *guarismo trece* (literally: numeral/figure thirteen) animals, although some of them may have been born in late 2012. The word *guarismo*, paired with a number, is used in the sense of generation or cohort to talk about a particular year's crop of animals, referenced or evaluated as a unit.

On the barrel or trunk of the body goes the individual identification number of the animal. For the males at Partido de Resina, this number is simply the order in which they are branded, so if there are forty *machos* in one cohort they will be numbered from one to forty. For the females a list of the available numbers in the overall herd of cows is produced so as to avoid overlap. This is because those females who are selected to become breeding cows might live and breed for fifteen years or more, as part of a herd of cows of all different ages. Having several cows with the same number would make the already challenging process of identification even more difficult, especially in the dynamic conditions of calf tagging, described above. Effectively, males are branded into a cohort of brothers, whereas females are branded into a larger amalgamation of cows where age beyond three years does not matter.

On the upper hind quarters goes the symbol of the relevant breeding association, which in the case of Partido de Resina is the first rank UCTL (Unión de Criadores de Toros de Lidia: Union of Breeders of Fighting Bulls). A veterinarian from the UCTL attends the

herradero precisely to confirm the information (age, tag number, and sex) that Joaquín and Algora have previously sent to the union about the animals born on the estate in the last year. This veterinarian is, in regional law, the person in charge of the event, and is tasked with making sure the information in the association's respective Libro Genealógico de la Raza Bovina de Lidia (Book of Genealogy of the Fighting Bovine Breed) is correct. Since 1960, state level regulations have stipulated that local government be informed of the event and that members of the Guardia Civil must be present to guarantee the age of the stock, reflecting the Franco regime's concern for the integrity of *la fiesta nacional*.

Below this goes the most important mark, the brand *(el hierro)*: the symbol associated with the line of bulls in question, which is the mark with which Joaquín chose to tattoo himself. Partido de Resina's brand, formerly that of the Pablo Romero line, takes the form of the mouth of a traditional bread oven. Many bull-breeding estate brands consist of the stylised initials of the founding family. A single bull-breeding estate can have several *hierros* linked to it if it manages several bloodlines. The estate brands overlap, to some extent, with the kinds of brands used on horses, which also carry the symbol of the estate where they were born or where they are destined to work (Zahara carried the Partido de Resina *hierro*, even though she was born on another *finca*). This logic extends to less wealthy local families too. José for example has his brand – in the form of his initials – embroidered into his saddle blanket.

According to the taurine encyclopedia 'El Cossío' (first published in 1943, written by José María de Cossío, and widely considered the principal reference work in modern tauromachy), the branding of fighting stock emerged in the nineteenth century, when the modern bull-breeding estates were founded, and when rigorous selection and constancy in terms of the output of suitably brave/aggressive bulls became important. This position is echoed by Prieto Garrido (2012, 22) who links the emergence of the *ganaderías bravas* in the nineteenth century with an increasing emphasis on *casta* (class, lineage, or stock) and *procedencia* (origins or provenance). In Spain a process occurred which, although particular to the context, was not entirely dissimilar to the way changes in late medieval land use (rationalisation) and then subsequent acts of enclosure in Britain afforded the emergence of 'breeds' of sheep. This these came a switch from the previous emphasis on the environment and feeding to the idea that good characteristics could be contained and transmitted through good breeding (Franklin 2007, 105-109). Franklin (2007, 108) ties

these shifts directly to the aristocratic expropriation and of land which, as I mention above, also took place in nineteenth century Spain, particularly in Andalusia, and which form a part of the history of Partido de Resina. The late nineteenth foundation of the Pablo Romero estate can be placed squarely in this context, especially given the common local understanding that, by breeding fighting bulls, the Pablo Romero family were precisely trying to build their own aristocratic credentials (their ***casta***) in order to escape their Castillan sheep breeding ancestry, and establish themselves in Sevillan society (Viard 2011, 49). Even back then, breeding fighting bulls was an uneconomical activity, and by definition only possible for the owners of large tracts of land: the *terratenientes* and *latifundistas*, whose relative wealth was (and is) so important to Andalusia's polarised class structure and its marginalised position within Spain (Bernal 1987).

The point to note here is that the brand of the estate references a set of histories, and, with that, a general sense of genealogical depth, to which Joaquín immediately alluded when I asked him about his tattoo in one of our more formal, on-camera interviews. He prefaced

his explanation for getting this tattoo – evidently carefully thought through – by saying that it was the "brand *(hierro)* of the estate *(ganadería)*, which is[7] more than one hundred and fifty years old." For him, the tattoo marked *"un antes y un después en mi vida"* ("a before and an after in my life"): where before he was just a "normal person" *("una persona normal")*, when he became *mayoral* he became a normal person with a "unique job" *("un trabajo diferente")*. People began to write to him online saying they admired him. They wanted photos with him. The number of followers he had on social media boomed because of his office and despite his professed normality. In his telling, it is through his role as *mayoral* that he now "stands out" *(destacar)*. The fact that he felt it necessary to emphasise that he was otherwise a normal person highlights a tension here between being qualitatively different and the same at different levels: on the one hand, being essentially the same – just another regular person from the *pueblos*. But on the other, being unique in that he is foreman to the fighting bulls.

The tattoo incident did not immediately have much of an impact. It was a limited moment in Joaquín's aspiration towards twitter ascendency which, outside the context of formal interviews, was expressed in terms of raw ambition to be a social media star; a visible figure in the world of the bulls. Photos of the tattoo were largely a non-event in the wider taurine world and twittersphere at the time. Sevillataurina, a tauromachy focused news site, did pick up the story, commenting on the *"curioso"* (odd) nature of the idea and also reiterating the obvious connection between this particular tattoo and the hot-branding of fighting stock: "On the inside of his wrist, he [Joaquín] has got himself a tattoo of the brand of Pablo Romero, the same as a branding *(herradero[8])* of this [Pablo Romero] stock." In my reading, this use of 'oddness' communicates the notion tattoos and the serious office of foreman somehow do not go together, and reflects class or dignity-of-office anxieties. Also, the response to the article included a comment on what was perceived as the foolhardiness of getting such an apparently loyalty-binding tattoo in an uncertain economic climate; where would he be left if he lost his job? This was a sentiment echoed by some of my informants in the *pueblos*.

7 "...el hierro de la ganadería, que hace más de ciento cincuenta años." I've translated *"hace"* as "is" in this context because the altenative translations of *"hacer"* when referring to time (to "turn" or "reach") make less sense in English here.

8 "... al igual que un herradero de esta vacada" (… the same as a 'branding' of this [Pablo Romero] stock): 'herradero' or 'branding' here refers to the act and event of hot-branding yearling stock, while 'esta vacada' is referring specifically to the Pablo Romero (now Partido de Resina) stock.

Closer to home, the reaction to Joaquín's tattoo had been more positive, at least in public. Simón, a close friend from Villamanrique had tweeted: “Amigo!!!! nice tattoo!!!” Algora, his boss, was prompted to speak about the tattoo in a wide-ranging documentary about the Partido de Resina estate. The programme, aired on Canal+ Toros[9] and was called 'Paisaje Herrado', which translates literally as 'Branded Landscape'. In each episode, the crew visit a particular bull-breeding estate, which is of course associated with one or sometimes several brands. Key people are interviewed and the history and current situation of the estate and bulls are showcased. With reference to Joaquín and his youth, Algora said the following:

> *“Now it's more fashionable to get a tattoo and he, well, instead of getting himself a tattoo with a caravel or some other weird thing that <u>they</u> get done, he got the [Partido de Resina] brand, which is what he feels and is with all day.”*
>
> José Luis Algora Cabello
> Paisaje Herrero (2014): Partido de Resina[10]

Algora refers to <u>them</u> when talking about the tattoo. It is not something he would do to himself. Alcalde Sánchez (2016, 238; see also Velasco 2007) suggests that tattoos are one of the many kinds of body marking which communicate social status in Spain, along with things like heavy suntans and wrinkled skin caused by hard work in the sun (the latter being particularly apparent in the case of Joaquín). Working with juvenile offenders in Andalucia, Alcalde Sánchez (*ibid.*) identifies some key tensions when it comes to tattoos and other ways of marking the body among marginalised young people in this context, some of which resonate with my own experiences working alongside Joaquín and his *pueblo* peers. Principally, the author outlines how, both in the academy and among marginalised Andalusian youth, there is an imagined tension between *tatuajes de moda* or *tatuajes comerciales* (fashionable/commercial tattoos) and meaningful, authentic markers of (self-)inclusion/exclusion and events (*ibid.* 248). In the latter case, the pain and suffering of getting a tattoo – or indeed other kinds of markings, burns, or self-scarring – factors into the depth of meaning associated with it. This differentiated level of seriousness is a

9 Canal+ Toros is a TV channel dedicated to tauromachy. It is currently owned by the Movistar+ group and is generally an opt-in at extra cost channel.
10 This episode was kindly transcribed for me by María José Solís Solís.

sentiment which Joaquín directly evokes, but in a cross-species register when he positions himself and his stock as fellow subjects to marking; in my reading, as subjects to the estate as an institution which has endured through time and which has now enfolded them into its own trajectory. While tattoos of Arabic or Chinese writing, or of caravels or eagles, blur into each other across the bodies of Joaquín's peers, in this context and according to Joaquín's logic, the estate brand stands out as singular.

Each time we passed the spot of the photo by the Eucalyptus trees I was reminded of the not-quite-controversy surrounding the tattoo. Joaquín would invariably be riding on my left, his left wrist and the oven mouth shaped brand-mark always innocently exposed, presenting to me the same framed image. Since his promotion to mayoral a couple of years ago, Joaquín's social life had expanded beyond the immediate confines of the estate and his home town Villamanrique. He had gone from being a lowly tractor driver and hay forker with family in Los Pitufos, the poorest neighbourhood in town, to being *de facto* gatekeeper to the internationally renowned *pabloromero* bulls. He was now juggling many more commitments and friendships – that is, he was positioned very differently in social terms due to his office.

At the beginning of my fieldwork, Joaquín took me out to the woods to meet his *"manriqueños locos"*, a group of boys from the village with whom he had grown up. They were manriqueños in that they were from or of Villamanrique and they were crazy *(loco)* in that when we met in the woods they swept in driving a bizarre mix of battered motorbikes or quads, dusty 4x4's and swanky town hatchbacks; drinking, smoking, pushing, revving engines and laughing. They were local boys, many of them working on the nearby horticultural plantations, a mixture of sons of labourers and sons of bosses, but were all very much men of the *pueblo*. From the woods we had moved to a small and rudimentary country cabin and drank and sang into the night. Joaquín was clearly close to this group and indeed was one of them. However, a few weeks after he introduced me to them I had asked when we would next spend a Saturday night altogether. His response had been that he had many friends, some of them *profesionales* (dentists, lawyers, psychologists), not just people who worked in the countryside. He also said that nowadays he was not so much of a drinker and so drinking out in the woods and on allotments was no longer his thing. What was more, he told me he wanted to do up his house and make it into the sort of place where he could have friends round, implying friends of all sorts, but also indicating

that it would be a taurine space. Taking on the role of *mayoral*, according to him, necessitated a change in lifestyle (read: less partying), but also represented a step up in the world, and therefore also a shift in how and with whom he socialised. Hence the tattoo marking *"un antes y un después",* although, as he frequently reminded me, he still felt he was *"una persona normal"*.

Now, when we went out in Seville, pre-drinking outside a night club and then going to enter, Joaquín simply whispered something to the bouncer and we were able to skip the queue. He barely needed a quizzical look from me for permission to confide his secret: as foreman of a prestigious bull-breeding estate belonging to a particular family, he could get into certain places in Seville for free. It was all very suave, but he was still proudly a country boy, the both of us nodding along awkwardly to the club music and gawking at all the beautiful people. Although just half an hour's drive away, the club seemed to me to represent an outer limit of the *pueblo*. We did not really know anybody there. Club nights came to Villamanrique on a regular basis, but the atmosphere was always palpably different due to the heavy presence of familiar faces. Even if people attended from the other villages in the area, they were visibly rural in their appearance and manners; evidently part of the community of small towns and villages on the West side of Seville. From Villamanrique you could travel east, skirting the marshes to Isla Mayor, or West to Hinojos, crossing the border into Huelva province. Or you could head 'up' to the bigger towns Pilas and then Aznalcázar, past these to Bollullos de la Mitación or Benacazón, and then by the time you reached Bormujos and Gines you were already just about in Seville. But throughout this area there was a tangible sense of common *condiciones* (upbringing/background), even if there were still, of course, internal tensions and snobbery towards people perceived to be from even more humble backgrounds.

Over the course of my fieldwork we went out with Joaquín's friends from Villamanrique and the other *pueblos* less and less. He remained loyal to close friends, but drifted away from the wider group of which he had previously been a part. Most people who I spoke to in Villamanrique knew of Joaquín and knew him as the new foreman, risen from a humble upbringing and made permanently visible among his peers due to his office. In many ways, the *pueblo* remains a key point of reference for Joaquín. It was here that the markers of a good standard of living were set; flashy hatchbacks, slick shirts, aviators, and beach holidays in Cadíz or Huelva. All of these are images which at one time or another

populated Joaquín's social media feeds, or those of his peers, and which, if taken too far, come under the rubric of *postureo* (posing). However, as I argue below, Joaquín's entry into the world of the bulls and, in particular, the *herradero* entail new forms of sociality. These echo the felt working class camaraderie of his peer group – who have all grown up with an abundance of jobs, and subsequently lost that privilege – yet, at the same time, they also mark a significant change for Joaquín.

El herradero

The *herraderos* usually take place at the weekend so that more people can attend. During my 15 months of fieldwork there were a total of three hot-branding days at Partido de Resina: one for the 2013 cohort of animals and two for the 2014 cohort, who were both numerous and of varied size. I attended a further *herradero* in September 2017. The events were structurally and atmospherically very similar, though a slightly different combination of people attended on the different dates. The following description draws on all the branding days at which I was able to assist.

From the moment I arrived in the morning, the day of the hot-branding would always feel different. The gates would be wide open and Joaquín would already be up and active, wearing a clean jumper and shirt. There would be no sign of the unflattering green overalls he sometimes wore for normal work days. The horses would have been seen-to early: fed and turned out as they would not be working that day. Sometimes one horse would be left in for the children to go and see. The yearlings themselves would be milling about in the corrals, nervous in their new surroundings, having been enclosed and separated into two sex-based groups the day before.

As on other days, we would gather outside the stables to talk things over, although the 'we' on these particular days would include a greater number of people than normal. Most of the local people who showed up every now and again to assist with and see the animals came along for the branding. Opposite the stables, in front of the main house, Joaquín's family set up a table with coffee, which was to be taken with sweet *abuelas* (fried treats) before the work started in earnest. Although at this point of the day the owning family was not usually here, there were still divisions among the people gathering over coffee. Some guests strode confidently up to Algora, shaking his hands and smiling. Others, who clearly

also knew him, were more formal in their approach; openly respectful in their manner. As Palenzuela (2017, 59) has pointed out, such rural events are not only ritualised in their form, but also involve both a collapsing and a reinforcing of social relations (see also Cruces-Roldán 2009 for a more general anthropological focus on forms of sociality in Andalusia). Kinship, affinal relations, friendships, and neighbourly connection all still matter, but they rub up against other forms and measures of sociality (*ibid.*). In the context of Andalusian hunting societies, del Corral & Palenzuela even goes so far as to say that the idea of belonging to a community of hunters "dilutes... internal differences of social class, gender, age groups, profession, education, etc." (*ibid.*) The *herradero* is different, though, in that although we can speak of *una comunidad taurina* (the taurine community), *gente taurina* (taurine people), or even refer to others being part of a wider *familia taurina* (taurine family), as I have mentioned above, bull-breeding is built on a platform of differential access to land and wealth, and this is something which is constantly present at events such as these. That said, the *herradero* does bring to the fore a particular kind of working class sociality which certainly resonates with the hunting rituals described by del Corral & Palenzuela (2017). The taurine specificity of the event also foregrounds the question of *protagonismo*, that is who or what gets to be protagonist or stand out in this context. Historically, this has been a central issue in tauromachy, especially prior to the advent of the *matador* as the primary human focus of the bullfight in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century; Romero de Solís argues that the reason why *toreros* of that era only did a few passes with the cape before killing the bulls was precisely because there was a tension between the individual, skilled practicioner and the crowd-as-protagonist in these *fiestas* (2010, 19). Individual, heroic salience was only tolerated if it was brief (*ibid.* 20). I elaborate these points below in ethnographic context.

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The branding of male calves was brutally efficient. We considered it *trabajo* (work) in the purest sense of the word. It took place in a set of stocks specifically designed for the job, which was managed by a team of men, each with his own task. The youngstock moved from the pens behind the scenes into the stocks which protruded into the crowd-lined corral, and then out through a gate at the far end of that same corral. This was the hard part of the day, where we – the young men – earned the right to participate in the more interesting session with the female yearlings. There was a brief thrill when the *machos*

(males) were released from the stocks and rushed toward the exit, lured by someone citing them in the gateway, but otherwise it was just hard graft that had to be done well and, most importantly, carefully *(con cuidado)*.

At every stage there was an acute awareness of the risk of damage to the animals, particularly with regard to the emerging rounded points that would one day become the horns; a constitutive element of what it is to be a fighting bull. Much like with horses, where the refrain is “no hoof, no horse[11]”, a bull with damaged or wonky horns is unfit for sale or for public presentation as an exemplar of the fighting breed. Such animals will still be tested in-house, however, in case they perform well enough to become stud bulls[12]. One mistimed door slamming shut on the head of a male calf was potentially worth thousands of euros. It was accepted that such accidents happened – they were “things that happened in the countryside” – but of course nobody wanted to be the one holding the rope that swung the door when they did happen. The atmosphere was festive, people wanted to muck in, but it was clear that some jobs were for the professionals: *los que saben* (the ones who know). As with Palenzuela's (2017, 62) hunters, these people – Joaquín, José, Algora – not only dispense technical advice, but also, arguably, in the process set the behavioural standards and police conduct, meaning that such gatherings are spaces within which values are transmitted, or rather, reconstituted.

The animals entered one at a time through a concrete and metal chute which was partitioned along its length with vertical sliding doors. They were fed into this chute from a wider alleyway, also partitioned, but with swinging doors operated from above. Working in this area meant forgoing a view of the action, but someone had to prod the youngstock through. This involved enduring a morning of unrewarding, hidden work goading the *añojos* (yearlings) with voice and lance from the walkways above. The need to maintain the flow of candidates for branding generated a sense of constant pressure. This was a

11 The Spanish version being “sin casco no hay caballo” (literally: without the hoof there is no horse).

12 In this case the bull breeder would have to consider whether the wonkiness or breakage of the horns could be in any sense hereditary, due for example to inherent irregularity or weakness. They would then have to make a judgement call as to whether the bull's performance at the *tentadero* (testing event) outweighed any physical defects that might be passed to its offspring. This happened with a small black bull, number 52, during my fieldwork. He tested brilliantly in house, with the bullfighter Manuel Escribano, and was then set aside as a potential stud animal. However, his compact frame and lack of *cara* (literally 'face', but more generally a reference to the size of the horns), saw him rejected in favour of another. There were no doubt other considerations made in this case, such as the way the public clamoured for grey roan, not black pablomeros. But the fact that 52 did not conform to the pablomero type more generally will not have helped his cause.

core team role, done by somebody who was regularly present on the estate and knew how the system worked. However, it was not a place where one could shine or make an impact *(lucirse)*. So, for anyone with *ganas de protagonismo* (a keen desire to stand out and be the centre of attention, even if it be momentary), this was not the place to be.

There were two sides to the chute and stocks: on the left-hand side of the animals, the view was limited to flashes of fur and leg through gaps and access holes in the machinery. On the right, the animal was completely obscured until it was secured in place, at which point the walls of the *cajon* (box/stocks) were opened like a double kitchen cupboard, exposing the entire right hand side of the beast for branding. The little heads of the *añojos* were caught between rubber-lined clamps behind a grill at the front end of the set-up. During my first year, wanting to impress, I insisted on actively participating in the securing of the animals in the stocks, not realising the grit required to work on the left side of the stocks. Moreover, I had not realised that even just choosing a side from which to work was a class statement. The people who most saw value in this side were the ones doing the job. This was dirty labour, involving reaching carefully into the box and grasping the shitty tail to pull it through a gap and pin the animal against the wall to secure its hind end. Certainly not a place to shine for anything other than hard graft.

Once the yearling was secure, the box doors could be opened on the other side and a chain fished out from underneath and passed round the barrel of the animal. For my first few *herraderos* this left side was worked by three local men, a team who, unlike everyone else, were wearing real work gear of the sort farm labourers would wear; blue cargo pants, stout boots and gilets over grubby sweaters. Once the actual branding started, we were left gasping for air in the smoke and heat, me still clutching the slippery tail. The smoke smelt nutty, rich even, and yet at the same time was repugnant and overpowering, coming as it was from burning hair and skin. The following year I was mocked by these same men for becoming a *señorito* (a little posh boy) as I showed up with my girlfriend and was less willing to wrestle the shitty end of the animals. My place was taken by young men from Villamanrique and the other *pueblos*, pressured into lending a hand by either Joaquín or José. Algora was above the allocation of such work, this being very much the province of the *mayoral* or senior *vaquero.*

On the other side, the whole process and experience was a lot cleaner. This was where Algora, Joaquín, and the Unión vet operated. In 2014 and 2015, Juan – the son-in-law of José – did the tricky job of securing the chains when the doors opened and then assisted with the branding itself. In 2017 I moved into this role, working directly alongside the vets and Joaquín, but still doing a more manual job. The Unión vet checked the identification tags of the animal and if any of the tags were missing or loose they were replaced. Algora, or locally connected vet students, injected the animals with an anti-parasitic drug before the brands were brought over. As representative of the estate, Algora generally did the branding of the estate *hierro*, which, due to its shape and size, required the careful administration of pressure when applied in order to ensure the mark was even. Meanwhile, Joaquín, the Unión vet, and Juan administered the other brands. Two or three irons would often be applied at the same time, meaning that everyone had to move carefully round one another with the hot metal tips.

At the head of the stocks, José – as the most experienced *vaquero* – cut the estate *señales* (marks) into the ears of the *machos*. His right hand, which normally shook constantly due to Parkinson's disease, became suddenly sure as he sliced into the fleshy part of the ear with his carefully sharpened work knife. He would not let anyone else do the job.

Once all the machos had been branded, we usually broke off for a late morning breakfast before moving on to what, for many of us, was the fun part of the day: the branding of the *hembras* (females). This was different, it was done *a la antigua* (in the old way) in the corral itself without the infrastructural security of the stocks, which meant that there was more scope for confrontation with the animals themselves. The team that had worked so hard on the smoky side of the stocks could now stand back a bit and perch with the rest of the people on the rails and walls surrounding the enclosure. The crowd was much bigger by the time we returned from our break, swollen by a steady stream of arrivals. Simón, Joaquín's closest friend from Villamanrique, was lifted in his wheelchair to a safe place behind one of the walls, where most of the non-participating friends and family stood. Almost all the women and children were positioned here, in an enclosure right next to but separated from the covert where Algora, Joaquín, the Unión vet, and now some members of the owning Morales family had placed themselves.

There was something almost military about the set up; everyone stationed behind a fence or concrete fortification. If the gates, walls, and enclosures, were bunker like, Algora's position was the command bunker, free from extraneous people, with paperwork, ear tags, vaccinations, and other equipment neatly laid out on a table behind him. From there, he and the others could survey the full extent of the enclosure in complete safety, but also slip out from behind the covert quickly, without any need to fiddle with rusty bolts or jamming gates.

The female yearlings were released one by one, straight from the chute into the corral. This effectively meant that the young men who were ready to leap into the 'arena' to secure the animals were dealing with a fighting animal which was free to move and express its nature. They might only be recently weaned calves, but they were still *pabloromero* stock, they were of the same substance as the bulls themselves, and we were being allowed to tackle them in front of an audience. It was not a free for all – the stock still had to be handled with care – but the female calves were present in a way that the males had not been when they were in the stocks. They had to be confronted as whole beings, rather than beings broken up into parts by the machinery of the branding box.

This is where *toreo* comes in. *Toreo* is, on a grand level, the art form which is at the heart of the modern bullfight: the coming together of two very different beings in an improvised performance, which can be appreciated, both by *toreros* and by the public, as a kind of partnership (Marvin 2015, 39). As Garry Marvin observes:

> “The essence of this performance is, in the language of the bullfight, *compenetración* (coming together as one; rapport, mutual understanding or a harmonious relationship – *how* man and bull move around and with each other.”
>
> (Marvin, 2015:41)

In this sense, *toreo* is both an art form and a set of values, rooted in the dialogue between Spanish and Northern romantics which led to a shift in emphasis in tauromachy towards aesthetic spectacle: it became, according to Andreu (2016, 429) “a virile art in which the triumph of reason over the uncontrollable force was celebrated.” This shift meant moving away from what Romero de Solis (2010, 15) has labelled the “spontaneity” and “tumult” of pre-romantic – and perhaps also, in that sense, pre-modern – manifestations of

tauromachy. What is key though, when it comes to *toreo*, is that it captures not just bravery, but also a sense of skilled manipulation and control: dominion over an unruly force. As Mitchell (1986, 405) argues, the bullfight continues to attract analyses which focus on masculinity, which, in and of themselves, capture something of the phenomenon. There are, however, other aspects which also bear analysis from different perspectives. Mitchell (*ibid.*) suggests that studies which look at bulls in the streets show that, from an emic perspective, courage must always be tempered by dexterity and skill (Martínez 1986; Mira 1976). Too much courage is not necessarily a good thing, either on the streets, or in the arena, where a bullfighter will be whistled at if he over-exposes themselves for the sake of showing their dominion over the bull, or indeed in the corral at Partido de Resina, where young men confront year old *becerritas*.

"¡Va la becerra!" was shouted from the alleyway that ran parallel to the chute. A second later, a calf burst out into the open; a leaping, swerving beast-in-miniature, smaller, leggier and a lot lighter than an adult fighting animal, but one that moved in a way that immediately conveyed what it was and what it would become as it matured. Although she was running about, maybe even looking for an exit, she was not running away. She moved with a constant sense of purpose, her attention going from one point of focus to the next: overwhelmed, but not quite fully vulnerable. There was always a pause before anyone jumped in, while the formidableness of the animal in question was assessed. A lesser specimen might have provided an opportunity for someone new to have a go. "She's just a little goat, a really small one! She's for you Robin!" Sometimes the comments were aimed at someone who was more experienced, but who was hanging back for whatever reason. It was hard to tell. There was a lot of joshing going on.

Meanwhile, the young cow would be circling the corral at speed, weaving in and out of the trees and pillars where some of the lads were hiding. The people sitting up on the fence lifted their legs, laughing, as she lunged at them in passing. If no one directly claimed the animal, looks passed between those that regularly sallied and someone would step out before another in the crowd shouted for us to get on with it – 'us' being the sons and sons-in-law of José, some of Joaquín's childhood peers, a few other *pueblo* lads, and myself, when I was not pretending to be busy with my camera or notebook. Nobody had said anything, but it was clear that only one person at a time should do the initial receiving of the calves. There were very few 'stolen' animals, meaning that generally the person who

stepped out was the person who played the main role in stopping the animal in its tracks. It was rare that somebody just grabbed the animal as it passed, robbing another of the opportunity to take centre stage and have their moment being protagonist which was something that could only really happen when a cow, calf, or bull gave his or her full attention to one human, or one human-horse combination.

“Let him try! Let him try!”

Everyone was watching us; a mixture of eyes, camera phones, and more serious looking digital SLRs. I caught Joaquín's mum's glance as she balanced her grandson up high so he could see. Her pitted, walnut face mirrored that of her son, though she smiled more readily. The Unión vet stood beside Algora, stern and notably professional, while Algora himself always seemed to be on the point of letting slip a jolly aside. His remarks generally came out in a more measured way than I expected, though. There was nothing frivolous about him, but he conveyed friendliness and approachability, even as he focused on the young taurine exemplar before him. It was as if I could tap him on the shoulder and he would tell me exactly what I needed to know, right there in the heat of the moment. He would listen, unlike the lads around me, who would joke first, and maybe educate me later, in private and with an odd formality to their tone.

Before stepping forward to confront each *becerrita*, I always wondered whether or not to take my hearing aids out. Nobody wore their glasses to wrestle the calves. And I am pretty sure nobody kept their smart phones on them. Would it be worse to catch a kick to the side of the head with my aids in, or to miss a crucial piece of advice shouted out in the chaos? Once away from the wall I would stop hearing the shouts in any case: the people lining the corral would become peripheral, a muted but lively background of movement. All attention would be focused on the calf running laps around the edge of the space. Would she come when I cited her? Would she go straight for me? Or would she feint a charge and skip round me instead? What if we both feinted to the same side? She might be small, but she would still mash me into the ground before the others could come to my aid. Compounding these doubts was the nagging feeling that, despite the egging on from my *compañeros,* I was being an arrogant fool of an anthropologist for even trying to get involved at this level. This very tension is where *protagonismo* and *toreo* come together for me, although I no doubt project my own anxieties onto the experience. There is a sense in which you are

one among others, all wanting your moment. You appreciate their mutual desire, and right, to be where you are, but you also want this opportunity to show your mastery and your bravery through your brief confrontation with the yearling.

Then it just happened: she passed my hiding spot, leaving behind a short-lived space into which I might move. At this point I had no idea which animal she was, she was moving too fast to be identified by her ear tag, and she was, of course, not yet branded. I stepped into the centre in her wake. The year before, the first time I had done this, I had awkwardly positioned myself as if I were back on the rugby field: legs apart and body inclined forward, braced for impact. I had called the calf as if she were a puppy, slapping my thighs in a moment of unthinking, attempted communication. There were appropriate gestures, they were just not sufficiently ingrained in me to come out in the heat of the moment. The others had a kind of verticality, and the way they brought their arms down and stamped at the same time, was crisp and elegant in comparison. They were movements calculated to draw the attention of an animal already saturated with visual and auditory stimuli. This year I was ready though, or at least I thought I was, having watched the others and countless videos of *recortadores* (professional acrobats who work with bulls). I carried myself in an upright manner, stiffly because I still felt the urge to lean into the charge. I cited with one side of my body, still not quite sure which side was the correct side according to the angle of approach of the beast. My neighbour Antonio had explained to me how a fighting animal's vision worked, but again the knowledge was not yet fully corporal for me. It was not as if the other young men practiced either, though. The daughter of a friend of José's might say of one of the men *“tiene cojones”* (he's got balls/courage), but José would always interject *“Sí, pero no sabe... no es así. Hay que girarla por el otro lado...”* (“Yes, but he doesn't know [what he is doing]... it's not [done] like that. You have to turn her the other way...”). Balls alone do not constitute *toreo*.

The moment when she turns towards you is always surprising. It is one thing to watch an angry animal charge round willy-nilly; half looking for an exit, half looking to defend herself by attacking whatever moves. It is another thing to suddenly become the focus of that animal, however small she may be. There is a moment of connection, you can see a curving line, extending ahead of her as she adjusts her trajectory to include you. Contact becomes inevitable.

I heard a shout “Careful, she might jump!” and an image of her bony *testuz* (forehead) connecting with my chin went through my head briefly, but my hands were already on her horns and the encounter transformed from a visual to a tactile register in an instant. Once my grip was secure, I started to worry less about injury and more about making sure she landed on the correct side when she went down. This while she was driving me across the corral with her momentum, boots and hooves peddling for purchase. Somebody already had the tail, I think it was José's son, José Antonio. Was he laughing as he went? And then Juan was next to me, his face and chest pressing into the animal's shoulder as he scooped her front legs from underneath her. Somehow his long, black hair and *flamenco* sideburns never seemed to get dirty, even when he got stuck right in. The calf struggled to stay on her feet, but we now had the momentum and she fell onto her left side.

We tried to avoid thumping her into the ground. It would take a lot to make Algora actually say anything, but he still winced when our weight came down on the *becerritas* too hard. José had no such inhibitions and would hiss “Careful! Don't get carried away!” (“¡Cuidado! ¡No os pasáis!”) as he stepped in to check the animal's ear tags. Ropes secured the front and hind legs, and once the calf's head was angled so that the horns were against the ground it only took a gentle hand on her throat to keep her still. People dropped off the wall as she was being secured, and by the time she was stretched out on the ground ready for branding the yearling would be surrounded. The focus on the person who had received the charge of the animal would evaporate, though words and gestures of congratulation passed between the team members who had brought the calf down.

Last year Juan had persuaded his none-too-impressed daughter (José's granddaughter) to have a shot at holding the head in position. Friends, girlfriends, wives, sons, and daughters, were frequently encouraged to get involved by draping themselves over the animal's neck for a photo moment. This 'help' was rewarded with a cross of blood on the forehead, in the same way as we had been rewarded the first time we took down a yearling. Sometimes it was more than blood, given that it came from the injection site at the base of the tail. The helpers knew what was coming but could only squirm in protest, as they were still technically holding the animal down. They had a responsibility, even if it was largely token. Such photos would become marks of *afición* online, although for those outside the world of the bulls, and some of the professionals within it, they had the

potential to slide into false *postureo*; trying to connect to or tap into something which does not reflect who you really are or what you really know.

“What's up? Why are you fussing? It's fine...”

(“¿Qué pasa? ¿Porqué te quejas? No pasa na'a...”)

Juan sometimes spoke to the calf as Algora and Joaquín approached with the branding irons. It was if he was saying that the pain did not matter; it would be fleeting, a brief moment of suffering prefacing a potential lifetime as a breeding fighting cow. Doing it in the open, with the calf secured by hand and rope, made the process less mechanical. The noisy distress of the animal was right there in all of our faces; you could not miss the stark whiteness of her eyes rolling right back in their sockets. There was a job to do though. The people carrying out the branding did it from above, with solemn focus. Some of the animals were to receive three-digit numbers because they were joining the larger female herd, so great care had to be taken to get the spacing right. When the numbers were not too tricky, whoever was doing the branding – Joaquín, Algora, or Juan – sometimes invited a helper to put their hands on the iron for a photo. The smoke and fire, as well as the concentration required to get the brands right, made for intimate images and moments. Members of the Morales family stepped in too, posing gingerly above their stock in their clean clothes.

The brand of the estate itself carried particular weight; it was the one that caught the eye. from the moment it emerged from the fire, still red hot, to the moment when it disappeared in the smoke as it made contact with fur and flesh. In that moment, the brand was transferred from the iron to the animal. The now cooler metal went unnoticed as it was passed back for someone to return it to the fire. The focus shifted to the mark on the yearling’s flank, a wounded red and black. This was swiftly covered up with aluminium spray, leaving it as neat and as stark as Joaquín's tattoo. The number and breed association brands mattered too, but did not have the same visual impact. When the *herradero* event was announced on twitter, it came with an image of the estate brand-mark emerging from the fire, not any of the other brands.

Once the calf had been branded, vaccinated, and had its tags checked, the crowd around it thinned, leaving only the core team of young men. The ropes were whipped away. Only the man at the head, usually the original receiver, and the man at the tail remained. They would confer. The man at the tail would promise to give the man at the head a good start to the open exit, but would inevitably release sooner than expected, grinning and shouting a warning. The receiver had to scramble to get out of the way, luring the calf out of the corral as soon as it leapt to its feet. Bravery to the wind, dexterity still very much in play. Once around the corner, they always dashed off down the alleyway anyway. The risk was more in our heads than real.

Protagonismo, postureo y toreo

Navarro Moreno's (1984) “ideological egalitarianism” has lurked in the background throughout this chapter, not quite fully present, but certainly somewhere in the *herradero* crowd. As Suárez-Navaz (2004, 74) notes, the idea persists that *la cultura popular* (working class culture) in Andalusia is defined – at least partly – by a feeling that people are essentially equal, and that this sentiment is rooted in the clash between *terratenientes* and left-leaning *jornalero* worker collectives of various types. Although regional differences in the way *la cultura popular* interacts with class have been debated in Spanish anthropology, the idea nonetheless remains central in academic debates. Joaquín's claims to normality can be read into this context. So too can his keenness to live well by *pueblo* standards; construed negatively by some as *postureo* when the photos become too much (e.g. topless photos while aspirationally cleaning the Landrover), but otherwise geared towards a common, non-exclusive standard of success. The moments where young men and young cows together become protagonists of a brief drama also feed back into a narrative of human egalitarianism in the way the men pay careful attention to one another even as they step out into the corral. The key tension I am trying to highlight here lies precisely in the mutually constitutive qualities of bravery and dexterity *(toreo)*, showing oneself but not showing off *(postureo)*, or standing out and not standing out too much *(protagonismo)*.

Joaquín's office, through its connection with Partido de Resina, is a powerful thing, which he has to both live up to and own. In his words, it’s a responsibility and an opportunity. He can come at it with great courage, as he does every day when he mounts up having not

had any formal training in horsemanship, but he knows – as does everyone around him – that he has to be smart about it. As his critics see it, he sometimes slips into *postureo*, posing with a *garrocha* (lance) when he does not know how to use one. In his humble moments he will admit this. Sometimes, he also tries too hard to be the centre of attention. But he feels these tensions as much as the people watching him do.

The estate as a whole, with its weighty history – the *hierro* – marks Joaquín; indeed, he has chosen to be marked by it. But it is the fighting character of individual cows which, in this chapter at least, has brought out exactly what he and many others of his generation are wrestling with.

Chapter III – The Selection: Testing breeding stock and the fragility of pedigree

"Cuando se cierra una plaza
y allí ya no se torea
se vuelve un triste escenario
y empieza a crecer la hierba.
Cuando cría la verdina
y se pudren las barreras
y se oxidan las barandas
y se despintan las rejas.
Se endurecen los cerrojos
y hasta parece que muera..."

"When an arena closes
and bulls are no longer fought there
it becomes an unhappy stage
and the grass begins to spring up.
When the weeds grow
and the barriers rot
and the handrails rust
and the paint flakes from the bars of the gate.
The bolts seize
and it almost seems to die..."

"I'm pro-bullfighting, gentlemen" ("Soy taurino señores")
by José Leon, translated by author.

La plaza de *tienta* (testing), Partido de Resina estate, April

The arena at Partido de Resina is nothing like the corral where the hot-branding action of the *herradero* takes place. Where that enclosure is an awkwardly shaped quadrilateral of rough ground, contained by mismatching wire and wood fencing and battered cement barriers, the arena is an inviting expanse of groomed sand, contained by neatly painted walls and matching gates. We have spent all the morning ridding the surface of weeds and watering it down so that dust does not obscure the coming test. The day was cool at first, but it soon warmed up. We have cleared discarded water bottles from each of the protective refuges that stud the circumference of the arena, and wiped down the bench in the shaded command covert. The bolts on the various gates now dribble grease; if you look closely, some of the paint is flaking from the metal or has been chipped off by blunt impact, but these details do not stand out from a distance, and the overall image is one of clean lines and control. I stand in the refuge, next to the door through which the fighting animals will enter. From here, there is nothing beyond the arena wall save the sky and a single, impressive pine tree. Sand meets blood red wall, red meets white, divided by a thick line of yellow, and white meets the sun-dulled blue of the sky. The stage is set. This is, on the face of it, a serious space. It is one of the better-cared-for parts of the set of buildings which make up the nucleus of the estate.

My job is to let the bovine protagonists into the arena. I raise a half smile from José as I imitate the stance of the *torilero* (gatekeeper) of La Maestranza, the arena in nearby Seville. I may not have his peaked cap, but I can still play up the spectacle by setting my feet wide and clasping my hands behind my back as I wait for the signal from Algora or Joaquín. The *torero* and his team are ensconced in their coverts *(burladeros)*, on the same level as us. The *picador* with his armoured horse hides as best he can; immobile and pegged tightly to the wall. Behind and above me, the audience quietens in anticipation. Members of the Morales family and friends occupy the tiered seating and white plastic chairs of the gallery. Everybody else stands on a rustic platform of sleepers and thick marine rope, which Joaquín had built in a rush of enthusiasm during his first summer as foreman a two years ago. He had even painted tiles with the estate brand and colours, to decorate his construction. It must have been difficult to squeeze everybody in before, though old photos showed people sitting up high on the walls. *Los dueños*, the owners, definitively enjoy the most comfort, presiding over the plaza from the shade of the trees

which grow on either side of their balcony. There is a patina of exclusivity on such days: not only do the Morales family invite guests of similar wealth and social standing, a common practice among landed families in Andalusia (Palenzuela 2017), but Joaquín also likes to control the number of people who come from the nearby towns. These *tentaderos*, testing events, are normally held *a puertas cerradas* (literally, behind closed doors: on an invitation only basis). Too many people and it will become too much of a spectacle, which might distract from the seriousness of the task at hand. Nevertheless, a few friends of friends, not necessarily officially invited, somehow always manage to find their way to the estate on the right day and at the right time. The testing of a new generation of cows is not something local *aficionados* of the Partido de Resina animals would readily miss.

Tentaderos are held on bull breeding estates to test the breeding potential of the young fighting stock. At Partido de Resina and other bull-breeding estates in Spain, this involves taking cows[13] between the ages of 24 and 36 months through two[14] of the key stages or acts of what we know as the bullfight. At this age, the cows are physically strong enough to do themselves justice and are long since sexually mature[15]. These two principal acts of the bullfight are the *el primer tercio* (the first third), which, in essence, involves the animal charging a padded horse and receiving a lance to the *murillo*, the mound of muscle at the base of its neck. And the *el ultimo tercio* (the last third), which is when the bullfighter sallies alone with the smaller red cape *(la muleta)* and attempts to further tame the animal's charge towards preparing it for death on the sword (*la suerte suprema*: the supreme moment/act). The bullfighter does this by working with the bull or cow to link together a series of passes on both sides, or horns. Though, by definition, *tentaderos* do not involve actually killing the animals. Each of the two stages are important, although the degree of emphasis on each *tercio* depends on individual bull-breeders and has varied over the course of taurine history. Both can be construed as ways of measuring the good characteristics of the individual animal and the line of animals it represents. In any

13 On some estates, young males will be tested too, but this is now rare and is done outside the arena on horseback in the open countryside – *a campo abierto* – without the use of capes so as to avoid exposing the bull to the stimuli it will receive during the bullfight. The bull must arrive at the plaza de toros unfought, with no experience from which it might draw to endanger both the bullfighter and the complete assessment of its performance.

14 Tentaderos generally skip the second act – *el tercio de las banderillas* – which involves the 'livening up' of the the bull after the lancing from the horse, which is said to make some bulls sluggish. This is done *a cuerpo limpio* (with just the body, i.e. no cloth aids), by the bullfighter or members of their team, who incite the bull, dodge its charge, and plant pairs of coloured harpoons *(las banderillas)* into the neck muscles of the animal.

15 Fighting cows are technically sexually mature at about 15 months, but the need to test them means that they generally will not have their first calf till they are three years old (see Caballero de la Calle, 1995).

bullfight, the performance of both humans and animals is judged by the various parties in the audience, but in *tentaderos*, the main focus is on the cow being tested. Unlike a bull, who only has a tiny chance of being *indultado* (literally, pardoned) for excelling in a public *corrida* (bullfight), the whole purpose of the *tienta* (testing) is to assess the cow for inclusion in the estate's herd of breeding animals. It is, first and foremost, a process of *selección* (selection) and the cow, from the bull-breeder's perspective, is playing for her life *(jugandose la vida).* Those that make the grade will live out the rests of their natural lives with their companions as *vacas de vientre* (brood cows), in what *taurinos* consider a bovine paradise: the *dehesa* or, in the case of Partido de Resina, the mix of light woodland, open grazing, and seasonal marshland at the back of the estate. Those that do not score high enough will end up at the slaughterhouse in nearby Pilas.

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In this chapter, by looking at *tendaderos* from the perspective of the Partido de Resina estate, I consider how the genealogical ideas of *selección* (selection) and *casta* (lineage, stock, caste, or class) have been co-constituted over time through the relationships between individual cows, *reatas* (strings or lineages of cows), *toreros,* and the figure of the bull-breeder – in this case, Algora. As we will see, there are clear parallels between humans and animals when it comes to *casta* and social difference, as was the case for Cassidy (2002) when working with horse breeders in Newmarket, England. Indeed, Mitchell (1991) has made the argument that bulls are subject to the same patterns of endogamous selection as bull-breeding families who seek to retain land in the family, and to whom strategic marriage and consanguinity matter. However, my focus here is not on drawing out those comparisons, though they sit in my description. Rather, I show how *casta* emerges as precarious, and changeable through the intimate process of testing fighting cows. If there is an echo between humans and bulls in Spain when it comes to *casta*, here it is in the fragility of the substance of class. For the cows, good breeding is not enough; they have to pass the test. For the *latifundista* elite, rising and falling over the last three hundred years of revolution and war in Spain, land has never been enough; an entrance into society in Sevilla and Madrid requires more. In the case of both the Pablo Romero family in the nineteenth century and the Morales family in the 1990s, with their respective mercantile fortunes, this 'more' has meant drawing on the aesthetic of the

countryside nobility and becoming bull-breeders (for this link, see also Thomson 2010); in effect, accruing *casta* by buying into good taurine blood, which links back into the past.

My principal concern, however, is the relationship between the character and type of the animals themselves and the stages of the *tienta*, and – by extensión – the actual bullfight. In the latter case, my interest lies in how this relationship has shifted in recent history. The context of the *tentadero* – the much romanticised and class imbrued landscape of the bull-breeding estate – lies in the background to remind the reader of the privileged, but intrinsically limited, position that bull-breeders have with regard to shaping the present and past of the modern bullfight. *Tentaderos* are essentially bullfights that take place in the countryside, which means that they closely juxtapose the two sides of a fighting animal's life: the field and the arena. This genealogical language of bull-breeding, combined with the embedding of the plaza into the wider landscape of the fields, also serves, in this chapter, to give weight to the idea of Partido de Resina as an institution and tradition with its own "insistent themitical presence" (Faubion 2011, 145), which even as it is shaped by those that inhabit it, imposes elements of a "regnant normative order" (*ibid.* 24); one rooted in selection over time. Like the Palácio de Fronteira in Portugal, with its stately house and gardens described by Faubion, the estate demands a certain "attention and reverence": an ethics of care, as if for an "aging relative" (2011, 143-145). However, unlike the Portuguese estate, Partido de Resina exiges care not only through the threat of weeds and rotting barriers in the arena, but through the threat of the loss of the bulls themselves, which **are** the estate and which have outlasted the ownership of particular human families.

As always, I am present in the text to help the reader appreciate the tugging, dynamic, and not always coherent qualities of the *tienta*. At points in my description, I also adopt a canonical, normative writing stance, reflecting the way I was talked to when watching the cows and *toreros* from behind the barrier. Given this, the chapter privileges the dominant perspective of Algora and other veterinarians involved with breeding fighting bulls (e.g. Padilla Suárez 2011; Prieto Garrido 2014). The cows, though, are the stars of the *tentadero* and of this part of my thesis, but, as we shall see, they emerge in various forms: as individual beings, intimately but fleetingly known by bullfighters, and as parts of larger entities such as lineages and generational cohorts. Perhaps most saliently, the cows feature as *ejemplares* (speciemens or examples of their type), where their individuality comes into contact with their collectivity. Finally, at the *herradero* described previously,

these cows were singled out and handled for tagging and branding; the *tienta* in many ways represents their last one-on-one encounter with humans before they are subsumed into the breeding herd as adult animals.

Arena and field

The exclusivity of admittance to *tendaderos* is layered. Once within the walls of the *finca* (ranch/estate/house in the country with land), access to the fields that contain the actual stock is circumscribed by constraints of knowledge and safety. It is not possible just to walk out along the tracks that link the enclosures; you have to ride, either in a vehicle or on horseback. In the territory of fighting animals, a recourse to swift escape is a constant necessity. Furthermore, the privacy of the animals entails a certain respect. Ideally, or so goes the dominant *taurino* narrative, they are meant to lives largely free from unnecessary human interference. Talego, del Río, & Coca (2016, 468) suggest that in Spain since the 1970s there has been a process of *"reencantamiento"* ("reenchantment") of certain rural spaces and species, away from a narrative of growth and exploitation and towards recasting nature as heritage. Del Corral and Palenzuela (2017, 74) argues in parallel that spaces designated as "natural" in rural Andalusia, particularly by hunters, engender a specific form of sociality, based in a shared sensory engagement with the environment. The bulls could be said to draw on these recastings of nature as heritage and refuge, as in the narrative of the taurine countryside as an aristocratic refuge (see Mitchell 1991; Thomson 2010), but so too they bring with them their own forms of sociality, as well as questions of access and exclusivity.

In practice, these concerns means that one is almost always accompanied when beyond the group of buildings at the heart of the estate, which is near the main gate. For those that can get in, the courtyard and area round the arena is more or less public. The spaces within the actual buildings are of course another matter. The bulk of the main house, the flats belonging to Algora, Joaquín, and the live-in staff, as well as the offices, are private spaces. There are also two salons, which function as places of hospitality and display. These rooms contain photos, tack, trophies, and other paraphernalia associated with the estate and countryside life, as well as tables, chairs, fireplaces, and sofas. This division between the buildings and the fields lends a special privacy to the bulls' territory, one that Joaquín sometimes used as an escape. Once out in the in the actual countryside, he does

not have to be constantly available *(estar pendiente)* to attend all comers. They cannot knock on his door, and being with the livestock gives him a genuine excuse to make them wait when they call him. The fields contain refuges that are known only by the animals and a select few humans. Even when *tentadero* guests are taken round the fields in the tractor trailer or a 4x4, they follow a fairly limited route that leaves a large part of the estate as intimate, unknowable space.

At Partido de Resina, the principal *chiquero* – the dark pen within which the fighting animals are kept for a few hours[16] before they enter the arena – is situated directly below the gallery. Guests have to step carefully around a grill to avoid riling the animal below with shadows and movement, though the children can never resist a look, hoping for a glimpse in the gloom. Most of the grills have lids to discourage this. People in the know also often go to great pains to explain to the uninitiated how, when on the walkways above the pens and corrals, a lack of awareness of one's bodily position in relation to the vision of the animals below might easily cause an accident. A shifting figure in the corner of a lone bull or cow's eye, a moving shadow or silhouette, could incite them to pile themselves into a brick wall or door, potentially splintering horns and destroying installations. Even just spectating the *faenas* (tasks/operations) of the bull breeding countryside entails a certain discipline.

Not so long ago, within 70-something José's lifetime, the event would have involved greater sartorial discipline as well. Now, depending on the prestige of the bullfighters coming or the number of people expected, we might dress up to the extent of putting on a new shirt and otherwise clean clothes, but the formality of the days of the Pablo Romero family is gone. Back then, the arena at Partido de Resina had been a rustic circle of eucalyptus trunks; fit for the purpose of exercising the bull-breeder's passion *(afición)* through the *selección* process, but not geared towards public display. José told me a tale about the second foreman of the estate, who, on returning from several days away caring for a *corrida*[17] of bulls, was met at the train station by Don Pablo Romero. The latter expressed surprise at seeing his mayoral without his *traje corto/campero* (literally

16 If the *tentadero* were to take place in the morning, at about 11am, the animals would be put in the *chiqueros* first thing in the morning, or occasionally the night before. In the latter case with fodder and water. If the the *tentadero* was to take place in the afternoon, at about 7pm, then the animals would be separated and penned in the morning. Similarly, in professional arenas, standard practice, according to the regulations, is for the bulls to be inspected, separated, and penned at around noon, with the bullfight usually taking place in the late afternoon or early evening.

17 A *corrida* is both a bullfight and the group of bulls designated for a bullfight.

short/countryside suit, a formal, flamenco style, riding suit) and reprimanded him, insisting that he change immediately once he got back to the estate. As the man who looked after and best knew the pabloromero bulls he was expected to wear the uniform of the countryside and his office at all times (see also Thomson 2010, 548). Joaquín, in contrast, only wears his *traje corto* for the most important bullfights, reflecting both Algora's relaxed approach to the *ganadero-mayoral* relationship and the tensions caused by Joaquín's proud refusal to acknowledge the Morales' role as owners by, for example, by going to the gate when they arrive. As Fortes (1962, 66) has argued, offices are often structurally related, or – in his words – subject to "complementary opposition" evident in "ritual observances", including clothing. Beyond the efforts mentioned above, only some of the invited bullfighters (the other key professional office in question here) suit up for the *tentaderos*, though to do so reflects positively on them and indicates a degree of respectfulness towards the event and its purpose. This notwithstanding, *tentaderos* at Partido de Resina still have a serious, *señorial* – stately, aristocratic – feel, particularly if the Morales family are present in the gallery box. The *toreros* are guests on the estate and their training needs came second to the needs of the breeder and the primary purpose of the day: the testing of the stock.

From behind the barrier

Finally, the nod comes from across the arena and the respectful hush deepens. The atmosphere down in the arena is one of tense anticipation, especially before the entrance of the first animal. The ways in which the bullfighter and his team can warm up and mentally prepare for work with fighting stock, without the animals themselves, are limited. Stretching, practicing passes, jogging round the arena, even moments of meditation can only do so much, particularly when the cows at hand are from an estate that is known to produce complicated bulls *(toros complicados)*. I feel their tension as I quickly scan the sands; sometimes someone – perhaps an apprentice from a bullfighting school – would want to change refuge at the last minute. I had once mistaken a nod of reassurance from Algora for the signal to start, sending everyone scrambling for cover as I swung the door open. José might have done this job better, but it would have been impolite for me to stand around while an older man worked. They would have told me so, too. Half joking. Perhaps to them it is less of an honour and more of a risky chore in any case. The bolt is huge, over-engineered to give enough leverage to open the heavy door in one clean swing. It

tends to punish my nervous rush with a sharp pinch to the hand as I wrench it and the door across, and try to wriggle back behind my protective barrier at the same time. Sometimes the animals rush out immediately, slamming against the metal as they pass. Other times there is a pause before their inevitable egress. The movement, light, and space always prove too much for the animal to resist, though, so the pause is never too long.

Even a small cow of between 24 and 30 months old is shockingly powerful as she barrels through into the arena. It only takes a second to lean out of the covert and swing the door shut, but in that second one feels horribly exposed. The cow knows where she came from and might well opt to return if the door is not closed quickly. It is her moment, and she invariably enters in a state of high alert, head held high, trotting or galloping as she takes everything in at once. For a fleeting instant, the arena belongs to her, everyone else tucked behind their refuges or standing stock still against the wall, all but invisible to her. But almost immediately one of the *torero*'s team swings his cape *(capote)*[18] out from behind his barrier, capturing her attention and steering her across the arena towards him. He disappears before she gets there and his companion in the next *burladero* along flashes his lure at her in turn, bringing her careering passage into a controlled arc round the arena. Sometimes the cow is distracted and it takes more effort – bigger movements – to get her focus and to manipulate her trajectory. Sometimes she fixates on one *burladero*, smashing into the wall where she just saw something move. Even these relatively unimportant incitations with the cape must be judged carefully: if she is committed, too much stimulus at too short a distance and the cow will not just fly by when presented with a new cape further along. Though initially the cow rarely makes contact – her charges aggressive but more threatening than focused – as she is dealing with a whole host of stimuli at once.

Once the cow is moving round the periphery of the arena, the bullfighter who has been invited to be the principal tester of this particular animal steps out to receive her with the *capote*, usually *a la verónica*; that is, with two handed passes so named for the way the cloth caresses the face of the bull or cow like Saint Veronica's veil and the face of Jesus Christ. These opening moves are called the *lances de saludo:* the greeting passes. Ideally, the cow will quickly commit to these passes with constancy on ground chosen by the

18 The *capote* is the cape, usually pink on the outside and yellow on the inside, used by both the bullfighter and his team: the former at the start of the bullfight or tentadero, and the latter throughout in their supporting role.

torero – usually close to the refuge from which Algora, Joaquín, and, sometimes, senior members of the Morales family assess the stock, which is opposite the *toriles* (the gate from which the cows sally).

In reality, as I mentioned above, the cows are often initially distracted. At the start, the bullfighter will often cite her and she will charge but then sail past without turning to confront her assailant again. At this stage the person next to me behind the barrier by the gate might say that she is *levantada* (literally, 'up'). Once she comes 'down' a bit she will also frequently express natural preferences *(querencias naturales)* for a particular part of the arena, such as the entrance, or develop her own preferences *(querencias accidentales)*. The former are understood as natural because most animals display such behaviour or desires, while the latter are understood as individual quirks. Much of the cape work consists of working passes *(trasteo)*, where the cow does not pass the bullfighter or team member, but rather both parties are moving. This way the animal can be manoeuvred about and its desires with regard to space *(terreno)* in the arena can be challenged or supported according to its individual temperament.

From the beginning though, one of the qualities that a *ganadero bravo* (breeder of fighting stock) looks for is *fijeza:* constancy of commitment or attention to the stimulus offered by her principal challenger.

> "On entering, they [the bulls] have a thing that I don't like and we are trying to get them to do as little as possible, but bulls like this keep turning up for us, and it's that they come out very loose *[suelto].* This is bad because all the laps they do in a plaza like Madrid's, or a plaza with a big ring, all the laps they do take away the strength to complete the entire fight well... until they focus and get angry, and once they do commit to the cape they then seal themselves [to it]..."
>
> José Luis Algora Cabello
> Paisaje Herrero (2014): Partido de Resina[19]

19 This episode was kindly transcribed for me by María José Solís Solís.

Fijeza is a desirable trait right across the world of the bulls, both in street events and in the arena. It is a necessary foundation upon which an aesthetically pleasing and artistic performance can be built through the commitment of both parties – human and bovine – to their respective roles and their relationship. The latter should be based on *compenetración:* "a rapport or mutual understanding between the *matador* and the bull" (Haro De San Mateo & Marvin, 2015). In the words of the *torero* Paco Ojeda, the animal must be "in the game" *(estar en el juego)*, as he recounted after a *tentadero* at Partido de Resina. As Algora highlights in the above interview passage, *fijeza* – which, by definition, is not displayed by a loose bull *(toro suelto)* – is a problem for the pabloromero bulls in particular. It is something that as a breeder he is trying to improve on and the principal medium for this improvement is *la selección*. The Union de Criadores de Toros de Lidia (UCTL) also identify *fijeza* as one of the nine key traits in their program for the improvement of the breed.

One older estate hand suggested to me in private, while we were feeding the bulls from the tractor, that these initial laps of the arena showed not cowardice, but cleverness. The animals were simply looking for an exit and for their herdmates. This assessment was unusual though, as it contradicts the dominant idea that anything other than focused and combative ferocity represented a contradiction of what it means to be *ganado bravo* (fighting livestock). From this perspective, a consistent lack of *fijeza* is one indicator of potential *mansedumbre* (tameness/meekness) and *desencaste* (loss of the essence or *casta* that defines a type of fighting bull). For many, a bull that is more flight than fight is no fighting animal. Online, with the peripheral but constantly felt presence of *antitaurinos* (anti-bullfighting activists), the ferocious, fighting nature of the bulls is often played up by *aficionados*. For example, if a video of a supposedly tame fighting animal is being passed around, some fans might deny its fighting pedigree. In this vision, the taurine countryside is a repository of pure fighting spirit and natural bellicosity. However, in other contexts the social side of fighting animals is played up. By way of example, when Joaquín tweets about his relationship with particular bulls he got a big response because this fits into the trope of the *mayoral's* privileged bond with his charges, which sometimes extends to close physical contact. Bulls are herd animals and they are, in certain contexts, understood as social, even brotherly, animals.

From this perspective, the countryside becomes almost utopian; a space where the bulls and their carers form close bonds, although part of the special romance of this image lies in the dangerous nature of the bulls, which never quite escapes the frame. Photos of calves who have lost their mothers being bottle fed or standing next to the fireplace often feature text reminding the viewer what they will become. In a similar way, although the companionship between two bulls who always graze together and groom one another might be celebrated, the hierarchical nature of the relationships between cohort members is constantly underlined and in taurine media battles for dominance are an over-represented aspect of life in the fields. That said, the caring, intimate side of the lives of fighting animals does carry rhetorical weight, as does the idea that these animals are social beings who belong in herds. Recall that in the Eucalipto enclosure there was a cow who spent most of her time away from her fieldmates, choosing to graze alone. Joaquín called her *"la vaca tonta"* (the stupid cow), while José opted for the less condemnatory and more poetic *"la vaca solitaria"* (the solitary cow). But, in both cases, she was singled out for the way she did not comply to the norms of bovine sociality. Another taurine image that plays up the values captured in the social side of fighting stock is that of a fighting cow lying on her side, exposed, so her weak calf can suckle. Don Jaime Pablo Romero, former owner of the estate, recounts how he, as *ganadero* (breeder-owner), spent hours smoking and watching the cows and the sunset alone on *el cerro del tabaco*, a slight rise at the back of the estate that constituted the highest point for miles around. It was there that he says he "learned much more about the world of the bulls, not of the bullfight, but of the bulls [themselves]", while watching occurrences like a mother feeding a doomed calf with broken hips. Joaquín, in turn, decades later in winter 2015, uploaded a photo taken through his binoculars that captures a comparable moment of intimacy between struggling calf and caring mother.

The sentiment that the fields are repositories of authentic, natural value that is the romance and emotional intimacy of the countryside are backgrounded during the actual *tentadero*, hidden beyond the walls and buildings. Yet they are still there, still present, and the people are still very much *en el campo* (in the countryside), relatively speaking. It only takes a call from the cow, often on the hoof as she charges, to remind us of her invisible companions and their environment. Nevertheless, the unfolding relationship between *torero* and *vaca*, and the job of assessing that relationship, constantly demand attention and draw focus.

Canon and modernity in the story of the pabloromero animals

Qualities like *fijeza* and *compenetración* sit in, and develop from, the moment of that first contact between the cape and the cow, visible to the audience and felt by the torero. The cow is at once representing fighting stock in general, the *pabloromero* type, and – within that type – a particular *reata* (lineage) or *familia* (family) of cows. Though the latter is only visible to those who truly know the *pabloromero* herd: Algora, and now Joaquín, too. Not everyone can see the qualities of the *vaca* in the same way, though the overall standard of the encounter is more widely visible or shared; felt in the mood of the audience. Algora, with the aid of his notebook, scoresheets, and with video footage from his phone, sees a series of exemplars, rather than just an individual. Not only from this season of *tentaderos*, but going back years.

> "With bulls it's the same as with horses, the first thing one looks at when one goes to buy a horse is the conformation, the morphological form of the horse tells you if it will or will not be able to put on a turn of speed. Well, in the bull, the same things happen, and back then [in the 1990s when he took charge of the estate] they were not very straight through the hocks, which was why it was a bull that struggled to move and drive itself forward , and well, this had become a bit fixed in the [*pabloromero*] lineage."
>
> José Luis Algora Cabello
> Paisaje Herrero (2014): Partido de Resina[20]

When a cow fixates on the *torero*, when she spins to confront him again after a pass, lowering her head in complete commitment to the charge, Algora sees not only *fijeza* and *recorrido*, which is the distance she covers after charging due to her momentum. Not only behaviour and action, but the physical conformation that facilitates that behaviour and action. For him, it's a case of balancing morphological traits and performance. It would be no good to have a cow with excellent *recorrido* if she had a neck too short to allow her to lower her head properly *(humillarse)* or if her legs were poorly set onto her *aplomos* (hindquarters). He must look deeper and balance his scores accordingly.

20 This episode was kindly transcribed for me by María José Solís Solís.

In his role as breeding expert and representative of Partido de Resina, at *tentaderos,* Algora uses a scoring system that focuses on four basic characteristics or umbrella categories of behavioural and physical attributes, though he will remain mindful of the other relevant traits highlighted by organisations such as the UCTL. Unlike the UCTL's five-point scale, Algora uses one with ten points. An average of six or more means that the cow in question passes *(aprobar)* the test and makes the selection. In an ideal world, the assessment of the stock would be independent of the ability or mood of the bullfighter, but there is a need for commitment from both parties. A good *torero* will draw out the positive qualities of the cow, just as a good cow will draw *arte* (skill) out from the *torero*.[21] The data from the *tentaderos* is kept in notebooks organised by year and is also being collated in a computer program specifically designed for breeders of horses and bulls.

Algora stands among other bull breeders as an expert on fighting stock and the different traits that characterise them. Bullfighting and bull breeding, as a domain of expertise, come with a canon of terminology, and bull breeders *(ganaderos de toros de lidia)* are among the elite curators of that knowledge. Of course, even if breeders are considered authorities, they are a diverse group of people who breed a diverse array of fighting stock, and day to day use of terms that describe this stock involves slippages, glossing, and completely different, if related, meanings depending on context. What is more, the bullfighting canon, along with bullfighting and the bulls themselves, has moved with the times. The *pabloromer*o story itself condenses some of the important changes in tauromachy since the late 19th century, particularly with regard to what kind of bulls and bullfighting dominate the industry.

To orient the reader, below I have attempted to outline 'canonical' definitions of four of Algora's key areas of assessment: *bravura, toreabilidad, hechuras*, and *fuerza*. This is fairly straightforward in the case of the last three, but more tricky in the case of *bravura*. At this juncture I have in mind the discursive authority of Algora's peers, so the bull-breeding canon I outline is necessarily slanted towards a (taurine) veterinary perspective on bull behaviour, although many *ganaderos* are as systematic and literate in their approach.

21 This is encapsulated in the common refrain “cuando hay toreros, no hay toros/cuando hay toros, no hay toreros”, that is “when there are bullfighters there are no bulls/when there are bulls, there are no bullfighters”.

I. *Bravura:* This is arguably the defining characteristic of the entire fighting bull *(toro bravo/toro de lidia)* breed. There are various definitions and these have evolved over time (Sarasa Juanto, 2007), but, loosely, *bravura* is the cultivated ferocity that sees bulls charge again and again right to the end. It is the ability and desire to keep goring under punishment. According to the selection of breeders consulted by Sarasa Juanto (2007) it is more than natural, more than just a highly developed defensive instinct, because it is the product of human selection. It can also be described as “fierceness channelled towards beauty” (ibid).

II. *Toreabilidad:* Whether or not the animal is conducive to *toreo* (bullfighting), that is whether it buys into the 'trick' *(engaño)* of the moving cloth of the capote and muleta.

III. *Hechuras:* Physical form or build. In the case of pabloromero, morphological problems centre round shortness of neck and the conformation of the hindquarters, which greatly effects mobility.

IV. *Fuerza:* Strength, vigour, endurance, and robustness, from beginning to end of the encounter. This has been a problem for the estate since the 1970s, manifesting particularly in *caidas* (falls) during fights. *Fuerza* in the case of the Partido de Resina animals is directly linked to a foot problem to which they have historically been susceptible and to the exercise the bulls get before going to the arena.

Algora bears the brunt of the responsibility when it comes to improving the Partido de Resina stock and he is well respected in the industry for the constancy and passion he has brought to the task, as both vet and breeder. For him, the process of *selección* is one where aspects of animal character, as in *fijeza* (attentiveness) or *bravura,* sometimes flows into physique, strength and even the environment which the bulls inhabit (the *finca*, with its sandy soil is not necessarily ideal for or typical of bull-breeding). This in many ways makes his relationship with the *pabloromero* animals singular, but, particularly at *tentaderos*, there is also an important collective dimension to the appreciation and assessment of the *vacas*. The latter is especially evident in the stage of the testing that comes after the initial reception with the *capote*: the horse.

Into the lance

Bravura, particularly in the sense of constant, awesome power and commitment, is integral to the spectacle of bullfighting because it is part of what transmits emotion to the audience. It connects the spectators to the series of encounters playing out on the sands of the arena. This *emoción* is most obviously present in the smiles that play across the faces of Joaquín and Algora when things are going particularly well, or in the cries of "¡Olé!" from the gallery after a well-executed series or a good display of *bravura*.

> "[My bull is one] often prompt to the horse, a very spectacular bull in the [stage of the] lance, that pushes with strength [*fuerza*], with ferocity [*fiereza*]."
>
> José Luis Algora Cabello, speaking on the behaviour of his bulls (Prieto Garrido, 2015)

The bullfighter, after greeting the cow, deposits her in front of the horseman with a series of passes, and rapidly retreats to the edge of the arena. Unlike with the bulls, the *picador* and his horse, buffed up in the padding of the *peto* armour, dwarf the cows. But being a fighting animal, this does not give them pause. In much the same way as a lone day-old calf readily charges a human or horse who approaches, most of the cows at Partido de Resina go willingly to the horse. Distance is key here. A cow placed in the middle of the arena shows her bravery/ferocity if she then responds promptly to the picador's clanking call with a vigorous charge. If she hesitates too long, or gets distracted, the *emoción* bleeds away.

The horse, a career animal, usually deprived of sight and sound for the duration, is trained to lean into[22] the charge, so the cow can demonstrate (or not) her commitment to knocking it over and goring it. As she makes contact, the cow receives the 'punishment' *(castigo)* of the lance, which has a point that is much smaller than those used in full bullfights[23]. Part of the quality of her bravura lies in her willingness to go to the horse again and again, over distance, despite associating the experience with pain.

> "We are very exigent. We look for, as I believe most bull breeders do, on the one hand *bravura* (focused and enduring ferocity) and on the other *toreabilidad* (aptitude for manipulation via the cloth aids), without losing that spot of *fiereza* (raw ferocity) that a bull should have so that it reaches the public, so he transmits; and this is indicated to you by what they give in the lancing. Here they are punished a lot in the horse; they have to go in at least five or six times, charging from far off."
>
> José Luis Algora Cabello, cited in Prieto Garrido (2015)

In the following passage from a televised interview, Jaime Pablo Romero – the last member of the Pablo Romero family to breed the pabloromero bulls – reflects on *tentaderos* in his day, capturing both the importance of the horse when testing cows and the decline of that importance.

22 Horses are 'into pressure' animals, but their basic training tends to involve teaching them to move off pressure.

23 The size and shape of the *puya* (tip of the *picador's* lance) is tightly controlled, but varies according to the class of animal, the local regulatory regime, and the historical era.

> "I fought will falling, with conformation, with *bravura*, with recovering something that is not valued today... …what nowadays they call *corridas duras* [hard bullfights/bulls], ultimately are the roots of what bullfighting was one hundred or sixty years ago. Then, the *tentaderos* were completely different from those in the present. The *tentaderos* before were done in the horse [stage]. The important bit [of the bullfight], the important part of the test was the horse. Because what the public that went to the bullfighting rings wanted to see was fierce bulls, with power. Now the public want lots of *muletazo* [movement of the *muleta*]."
>
> Jaime Pablo Romero

The *pabloromero* line produces, or is supposed to produce, 'hard' bulls *(toros duros)*; ones that traditionally shine in the *tercio de varas* with the horse – they 'grow' *(crecer)* with the punishment - but ones who tend to struggle with the emphasis on *"muletazo"* that Don Pablo Romero identifies above. One aspect of *toros duros* is the constant sensation of risk that animates the confrontation and produces *emoción* in the watcher: their fierceness is harder to tame and they are wild and convincing in the horse. Too much of this is not necessarily a good thing, though. For an aesthetically pleasing performance in the final stage of *tentaderos* and bullfights, this raw ferocity must be tempered by nobility *(nobleza).*

A noble cow or bull obliges the bullfighter by playing along with the game of passes and pauses, zeroed-in on the cape and not hooking left and right, not searching for the human behind the movement. This allows the *torero* to be relaxed in front of the noble animal. The modern bull *(el toro moderno)* is thus cast as an increasingly, sometimes problematically, noble bull, carefully bred for excellence in the last stage of the bullfight with the smaller *muleta* cloth aid. Linked to the concept of the modern bull, there is the concept of the commercial bull *(el toro comercial)*, sometimes known derogatively as *toros dulces/sumisos* (sweet/submissive bulls). There are certain bull-breeding estates – often with a large proportion of Domecq blood - that are known to produce animals that are tailored towards the *muleta* and, with that, towards the potential for elite bullfighters to consistently produce triumphant third acts. Collectively, these estates dominate the modern bullfight: they produce the most animals and their animals are consistently fought by the top bullfighters.

These animals are bred to a very particular concept of *bravura*, one where brute ferocity *(fiereza)* "is selected for and oriented towards nobility" (Sarasa Juanto, 2007). Though, as he constantly emphasises, Algora reckons that it is important to maintain that spark of *fiereza* in order to bring in the public. Contrast an image of a *pabloromero* bull, charging like a cannonball *(cañonazo)* at horse or cloth from a great distance, with the image of a Domecq bull, relatively indifferent to the horse, but charging the *muleta* with a constant, rhythmic, almost slow gallop. The latter has a mouldable fury, a charge that can be bent round the bullfighter with subtle movements of the cloth, and, importantly, a charge that lasts and thus facilitates the bullfighter's *arte* right through to the last act.

The former on the other hand has sheer force of presence: it is a beautiful, destructive force that readily transmits risk and *emoción*, but that is intrinsically less tractable and often less enduring. These are extremes – there are overlaps and exceptions between and within categories of bull – but the distinction between *toros duros/complicados* or *los de antes*[24] (those [bulls] from before), and *toros modernos/comerciales/dulces/sumisos*, exists and does more than just divide two types of bulls. As types within the overall breed, they are statements about what bullfighting is and should be about now and in the future. This distinction also connects with wider divides in taurine and non-taurine Spain and Europe (see Douglass, 1997). The *afición* in different parts of Spain, as well as the *empresarios* of different arenas, tend towards favouring or supporting particular kinds of bull. La Maestranza in Seville, smaller arenas in the province, and, to a large extent, arenas across Andalusia, favour smaller, modern bulls, and, by extension, bullfighting with an emphasis on art. In contrast, the North, Pamplona for example, and to some extent Madrid, is known to favour a larger bull, putting a lot of stock in the presentation of the animal. Las Ventas in Madrid, as the world's principal bullfighting arena, hosts a series of bullfights in the autumn that specifically aims to promote types of bull that are outside the mainstream or that might be endangered: *encastes minoritarios* (minority types). These bulls are frequently unique in appearance, reflecting their particular genetic heritages. Among the non-mainstream bulls, the *pabloromeros* are particularly renowned for being good-looking animals. Indeed, according to Don Jaime Pablo Romero, they were the first bulls he remembered being referred to as *toros guapos* (good-looking or handsome bulls).

24 This term was used to differentiate the bulls of the last century from the bulls of today within *encastes* too, even within the pabloromero lineage.

To some extent, the above categories map on to a division between two kinds of *aficionado* (fan) of the bulls: *toristas* (those that focus their fandom on the bull) and *toreristas* (those that focus on the bullfighters *(toreros)* and the art they produce with the bulls). Those who consider themselves *toristas* often show a heightened appreciation for the diversity of *encastes*, which are sub-types of bulls that have certain fixed characteristics which have been successfully selected for and reproduced over time. This type can be from a single bull-breeding estate, as is the case for Partido de Resina and the pabloromero type, or from several estates, as is now the case for the Domecq type. Some *toristas*, through blogs and in person, critique the Domecq *encaste* for its current dominance and the detrimental effect it has on diversity within the overall herd of fighting animals *(la cabaña brava)*. They accuse it of encapsulating *el monoencaste*, which is precisely the hegemony of a single kind of bull based on bullfighter preference. The argument, in essence, is that if elite bullfighters put pressure on the *empresarios* who run the arenas and demand 'uncomplicated'[25] bulls, then they risk pushing out the *encastes minoritarios*. The counterargument is that bull breeding estates such as Partido de Resina are in the minority because "they do not charge"[26]. The implication being that they do not charge correctly or in a way that is suitable for modern bullfighting. They may be good-looking, but – as is sometimes suggested below photographs in facebook groups such as "Toros de Lidia" – is it all just *fachada* (a facade)? Algora's response to the not-charging accusation is that everyone has their own opinion when it comes to what counts as charging and what does not. He would argue that his bulls have changed with the times.

The *tentadero* is where the details that make up the above trends and distinctions are worked out. And where the bullfighters have to work things out with an animal that, in the case of Partido de Resina, is prejudged as being difficult or complicated. The tricky reputation of *pabloromero* stock sometimes translates into nerves, which can in turn effect the ability of the bullfighter and his team to get the best from the cow at hand. As I mentioned above, the quality of an animal's charge depends on a mixture of morphological and behavioural traits, and on the connection or *compenetración* between it and the bullfighter. The aesthetic ideals of modern bullfighting demand a mobile bull that lowers his

25 This is, of course, entirely relative, Domecq bulls are still aggressive half-tonne animals that require considerable expertise to 'fight' (*torear*).

26 The full quote "The minority type [*encaste minoritario*] is in the minority because they do not charge." is attributed to the bull breeder Daniel Ruiz, speaking on Canal+ Toros.

head in the charge, allowing for an even greater artistic contrast between the verticality of the bullfighter and the horizontality of the bull. It is in the *muleta* that this is most visible.

> "...we are very much looking for bulls that bow their heads. At present, at the testing events, we are finding that 80% of the cows bow their heads."
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> José Luis Algora Cabello, speaking on the testing of pabloromero cows (Prieto Garrido, 2015)

End of the test

From my *burladero*, I can see that, having gone to the horse, the cow is now bleeding. She is also more focused. The initial laps of the arena, the welcoming passes, and her trips to the horse and lance have tired her somewhat. At this stage, she engages one-on-one with the bullfighter, who must ideally show command *(mando*), and maintain and direct her attention. Although the objective is not to kill the cow, the *torero* usually still does the work *(faena)* required to take her to the moment where she would have been killed, by working through series of linked passes. Sometimes, when the cow is exhausted, the bullfighter will take a moment to practice the act of killing, but without the sword in hand. By going through a variety of passes and producing a well-rounded final act, the bullfighter also allows the watching bull-breeder to fully assess the cow.

A fit *vaca* still has lots to give in *tercio de la muerte* (act of death) and so the bullfighter tends to receive her with passes which both take advantage of and take control of her energy and eagerness, making her work and charge from a distance. These *pases de recibo* (receiving passes) might include a series of *doblones*, where the bullfighter stretches long and low, bending his knee and forcing the cow to arc her charge around him. Or they might include a series of *estatuarios*, where the bullfighter stands tall and still, with his feet together, using both hands and the sword to present the *muleta* to the cow, who passes him in a relatively straight line, before turning for the next pass. Neither type of pass brings the animal particularly close to the human. In contrast, the core of the *faena,* and also the testing, is built round series of *derechazos* (right-handed passes where the sword or aid (*ayuda*) is used to extend the surface of the muleta) and *naturales* (left-handed passes without the support of the sword), which both, in principal, involve closer

proximity to the cows as they pass. It is in these passes that the watching breeder can most fully assess the quality and features of the cow's charge, as the bullfighter attempts to use his connection with her – via the folds and movements of the *muleta* – to shape and moderate the flow of her rushing attack. Some *ganaderos* are purported to assess the charge with a list of tens of component traits. What at first glance is a simple motion of aggression can be broken down – with the adequate eyes – into specific qualities, which are, according to this logic, hereditable in themselves.

By this point, the cow should *amplomarse*, that is stop careering about and become more judicious in the use of her energy as she tires. She measures the distance between her and potential targets, which allows for slow, dramatic *toreo*, punctuated by the (ideally) commanding voice of the bullfighter as he talks to her. The *torero* may also introduce adorning passes *(pases de adorno)* in addition to the core passes, to further show how controlled, refined, or tempered the animal's charge has become.

It is this figure, the combination or coming together of *torero* and *vaca,* which is assessed by Algora and, in a supporting role, Joaquín. This is “skilled vision” Grasseni (2004); that is, a mode of detailed visual appropriation requiring years of trained attention and a process of Ingoldian “enskilment” (Ingold 1993, 221). However, the object seen here is not only the cow's body and response to the observer, but rather the relationship between bullfighter and cow, and, most importantly, what the quality of that relationship or *compenetración* (rapport) says about the cow as *un ejemplar* (an example or representative) of her *reata* (matrilineage), her *pabloromero* type, and her breed (fighting stock more widely). In this sense, Algora – and, to some extent, the rest of us – are watching not only a face-to-face encounter which foregrounds and draws out the cow's qualities, in terms of both physique (e.g. strength, length of neck, depth of hindquarters) and character (attentiveness, ferocity, nobility). We are also watching out the unfolding evaluation of her *encaste* (type) over time; decades of breeding effort playing out in a one-on-one encounter in the arena. Beyond that, we are witnessing the decline (or recovery) of the *pabloromero encaste* and how this speaks to the wider story of the homogenisation of modern bullfighting as it, supposedly, moves towards an era dominated by *monoencaste* and insipid, predictable, overly-noble bulls. The latter being a result which the taurine critic Antonio Lorca (2017) has scathingly labelled *“tauromaquia descafeinada”* (“decaffeinated tauromachy”).

As the test draws to a close, the bullfighter must work carefully with the cow, being careful not to over-exert her and leave her completely leaden and still *(aplomada)*, unable to summon further charges. The spectacle of a man repeatedly, insistently, but unsuccessfully waving a cloth in the face of an exhausted animal is one that is not only ugly, but also devoid of positive emotion. Occasionally, Algora even has to call an end to the test if the bullfighter or his colleagues try and squeeze one too many series of passes out of the cow when it is clear that she has no more to give.

Having spent the bulk of the *tentadero* watching from my refuge, I have to come back down to earth once the test ends and reapply myself to the doors. The exit of the cow is often more laborious than the entrance, as by this point she has stopped actively looking for a way out and is focused on what is close to her and immediately threatening. This means that I often have to shut the door on not only her, but also the person who is luring her through it with *pases de tirón* (pulling passes). Only once the door has been closed can the buzz or lack of buzz caused by the test truly be felt as everyone steps out from their refuges or stands up from their seats. If the cow is the last cow to be tested, then the people above usually come down into the plaza to talk to the *toreros* and reflect on the performance of the *vacas*.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the *vaca's* wounds are assessed and treated before she is released from the corrals to trot down the principal alleyway *(callejón)* and find her companions out in the receiving field. Closing the big corral gate as the last cow passes is a particularly evocative moment, which captures the different affective atmospheres of the plaza and the countryside proper – the former full of intensity and purpose, the latter more diffuse, like a vast, rather relaxed waiting room. In the spring, the *callejón* is overgrown, every gateway creating an arc of squashed vegetation round it. It contrasts sharply with the crisp lines of sand and paint in the arena. For me, this moment of release encapsulates the connection between the two scenes: the link between *el cerro de tabaco*, where Don Pablo Romero smoked his cigars while watching his cows and calves, and the arena, where those same calves quite literally come into their own. In this sense, to appreciate the female fighting stock in one context is to appreciate them in the other, too. There are other possible ways of imagining the life trajectories of the female calves, but

the normative emphasis is on their connection to the arena, and, with that, through their interaction with the bullfighter to the *encaste* and breed.

Chapter IV – Riding among Bulls: Equestrian “know-how”, flamenco style, and pilgrimage

"Me gustan los jacos buenos
que tengan más de una sangre
y que sean de un solo pelo...
Y que galopen con arte
como un péndulo en el aire
igual que un capote lento,
lo mismo que el cante puro
o como el baile flamenco"

"I like good hacks
which are of more than one blood
and are all one colour...
And which canter with skill
like a pendulum in the air
identical to a slow cape,
the same as pure song
or like flamenco dancing"

“Me gustan los jacos buenos” by José Leon, translated by author.

Nimes enclosure, Partido de Resina estate, April

“Hold the steers there, against the fence. No, not there! A little bit further along. There.”

Joaquín puts me in my place and then rides off in silence with Joselito, who is assisting us for the day. They immediately begin to move apart as they pick their way through the sand baths left by the bulls that are waiting for them just over the rise. Fretting, I call out after them.

“Do you want me in front or behind this time?”

Joaquín pauses, jerking his horse to a stop as if slighty irritated at having to explain further the manoeuvre we were about to attempt. Cabezón chucks his head up in protest, straining against the clumsily fixed martingale which prevented his chin from passing the horizontal.

“In front. Don't let the steers get away from you.”

Squeezing their horses on, the *mayoral* and his assistant trace two diverging lines as they move to encircle the eight or nine hidden bulls. Joaquìn's two little dogs trace their own line, Mona out in front as always. She is his favourite and he dotes on her, constantly emphasising how good she is and how smart she is compared to her more nervous and scatty brother. Even in her appearance she is better; sleek and shiny with a neat black coat, whereas Mono is hairy, his blond coat permanently bedraggled.

Back in the shade of the messy row of trees on our side of the field, Zahara and I fidget as we wait, both still relative newcomers, anxious in our different ways. I tinker half-heartedly with my camera, not sure whether I have time to get my notebook out without risk of interrupting the coming *movimiento* (manoeuvre) with the bulls. The mare champs softly at her mouthpiece. Algora had initially said that she would not need much of a bit, emphasising that she had been ridden by children in an English-style *filete* (snaffle bit) back at home. But she had soon ended up with a harsher shanked bit with a curb chain; a version of *el bocado vaquero*, the mouth-related accoutrement of the Andalusian stock handling horse. It is, after all, one thing to take children round an indoor arena and another

to move fighting bulls. This is serious work, with the bulls representing an ever-present danger. Joselito's father had been knocked from his horse, gored, and killed by a bull on just such a working day. The mare needs to “listen” to her rider (*“hacerle caso”*) and that is the end of the matter, Joaquín asserts, parroting the admonitions of Joselito, who has more experience training horses, though others who make their living with the bulls would still most likely call him an *aficionado* (amateur), rather than *un profesional*. From an idealised, expert perspective – like, for example, that of Pajito, who gave me lessons in Andalusian equitation - none of us were fully *preparado* – trained or prepared – for the task we were about to undertake. In Pajito's opinion not even Cabezón, Joaquín's older horse, was suitable for close work with the bulls. Every jerking, harsh application of the reins made Cabezón’s mouth harder, chipping away at the good training foundation (*doma*) he had had under the previous *mayoral*.

Waiting with us beneath the oak trees, Quito, Borracho, Negri and La Profesora huddle against the fence, looking anxiously in the direction of the shouts of the now invisible pair of horsemen. Borracho stands out, lumpen, black, and brutishly bovine as he paws sand up and over his back. The flies are not yet as irritating as they get during the summer, but they are present. He and the other three begin to inch their way along the fence back to the gate and Zahara and I have to shift our position a few steps to pin them in place. These steers (*bueyes* or *cabestros*) are not quite so well trained that they will wait for the bulls patiently, but they are sufficiently accustomed to their duties that a sharp word and a few steps forwards will suffice to halt them. Equally, neither Zahara nor I are very good at getting the distance and pressure required to hold the *bueyes* in place exactly right. There is no *cabestrero* in charge of their, or our, training; just Algora and Joaquín, hard-pressed and overworked. José knows how to train *bueyes*, but it is not the sort of work one does for free.

Today, Zahara seems more preoccupied with where the other horses have gone, her ears pricked in their direction and her body poised to move towards them. In these situations, it feels as if she is pushing gently, constantly against my seat in the saddle. She does not fight my hands, or the bit and angry, serrated noseband, but nor does she give me a sensation of available, synergistic power. We probably look as awkward as I feel. In any case, I am as distracted as she is: somewhere between being an anthropologist in the field

and being an apprentice *vaquero* (cowhand). She has been enrolled into this world as much as I. As has Joaquín, who not so long ago had never ridden among bulls.

The moment when the bulls come into view always startles me. They move fast, trotting with their heads held high as the *pabloromero* animals are apt to do, only breaking into a gallop when pressed by Joselito, who has made the widest loop so as to position himself directly behind them.

“Ah hah, ah hah, ah hah!”

Joaquín is flanking the bulls aggressively, pushing them into the fence while taking pains to not cut them up by passing an imperceptible - but very real – line moving in front of the group, which if crossed would see some or all of the bulls hesitate or even stop. Travelling at speed, he has to know exactly where that line is, pushing against but not crossing it. This would be potentially disastrous, particularly if just one or two – perhaps a pair of close companions – peeled off from the group. *Toros sueltos* (loose bulls), away from united sense of direction of the herd, become a different, very dangerous, kind of animal.

An image of Joaquín speaking red-faced to TV cameras comes to mind as I watch number 19 start to hang back, threatening to veer towards both the foreman's horse and the open space beyond him.

“Our bulls are difficult to handle in the countryside.”

Cabezón shies slightly, giving the bulls space. I see Joaquín's heel working the sharp corner of the stirrup into the horse's flank, pressing him back in. The ears of *toro* number 19's faithful fieldmate, number 21, wiggle violently, indecisively, as he moves to join the troublemaker. The pair of them are the living embodiment of *pabloromero* difficultness: independent minded, confrontational, and territorial. Although, that said, I always get the impression that *el veintiuno* (21) is just following along. Indeed, Joaquín constantly singles out number 19 as a potential danger, even if we are just surveying this lot of bulls from the relative safety of the Toyota. He never seemed relaxed like many of the others. As Joaquín puts it, he is *un toro inquieto* (a restless, troubled bull).

All this happens quickly, I'm already moving; putting aside the history of the brotherly companionship between number 19 and 21, giving the steers space, and calling their names to get them running. I single out the skittish and stupid Borracho. He's big and clumsy but quick off the mark. Zahara accelerates. I can feel her back legs underneath me, pushing through in her slightly clumsy, tight way. We have been working on our transitions to canter, trying to get her fitter and trying to get her to move more correctly: less pogo-stick, more pendulum. We are not yet there, though it still feels glorious. Even if she is untidy when moving off or round corners, she is fast. We blast out onto the track, moving well out of the bulls' area of influence as they close in on the gate. They have spotted the steers and even numbers 19 and 21 have opted to stay with the herd momentum, jostling into place behind the others as they go through the bottleneck. Despite the latent strength of character of each bull, they keep their heads down and stick together.

Joaquín and Joselito slow a little, careful not to press the bulls too hard as they catch up with the steers and surge through the gate and into the *manga* (sleeve) between the fields. There is dust and mayhem, but this time it has all come together. I lead, cantering downhill on Zahara. The four steers follow, leading the nine bulls on in turn. Harassing and pushing from the rear are the foreman and his assistant, with Mona and Mono barking and nipping at the heels of the bulls too. The fences channel the whole assemblage down and away from the field, towards the corrals and estate buildings. The whole manoeuvre barely hanging together on a series of basic interspecies understandings, years of experience and training, a mess of decaying infrastructure, and – most of all – on the foreman's determination to get the job done, even if it is in a seat-of-the-pants, rather than a technically competent, way. The aesthetics of good technique and the pressure to do the job well are at the heart of the experience, even in all the chaos. The bulls in the surrounding enclosures look on warily as we fly past.

Once we are moving altogether we can relax a little bit. By speeding up or slowing down, we – the horsemen (*caballistas*) – can easily adjust the pressure we are putting on the steers and bulls sandwiched between us. The aim is to keep the animals bunched and moving. A loss of momentum could result in the bulls getting strung out or even a horse and rider being confronted by a bull in the *manga*, trapped between fences and gates. Before even entering the bulls' field, we have to make sure that all the gates along the planned trajectory are opened or closed as they should be. If one bull were to turn around and try to go back to his field then the whole thing would fall apart and become a mess of confused animals, all wanting to go in different directions. The bulls in the enclosures on either side would come to the wire, curious and belligerent; threatening to break through and unleash even more chaos.

The routine movement of the bulls requires equestrian and taurine "know-how" (*saber hacer*), but it is when things break down that you really need to have an understanding of what you are doing. Confronting a loose bull in the sleeves between the fields requires *destreza técnica* (technical skill) and *cojones* (balls) in both horse and rider. Such moments, some *taurinos* might argue, constitute a kind of *toreo* in that the *mayoral* or *vaquero* must 'play' the bull and his inclination to charge. Dancing around an aggressive bull in a limited space is the stuff of expertise *a la vaquera*. The manoeuvres Zahara and I carry out are the very basics of what might be required of a *vaquero* and their mount. And

we are not particularly good at it. I care deeply about getting things right in the field, but when it comes down to it, I am just happy to have the privilege of being one of the members of the riding team, regardless of my or my horse's performance. Joselito, on the other hand, never rides Zahara in front of the cameras when taurine journalists and documentary makers come to the estate. She is small and has sweet-itch, which makes her mane and tail scruffy, with bald patches. Beyond that, she might also do something *feo*, something ugly, such as chucking her head up to resist the contact of the bit. According to Joselito and others like my teacher, Pajito, Zahara has no *estilo* (style); she is *"una jaca sin clase"* ("a hack without class"). Not the ideal kind of horse with which to manoeuvre mature fighting bulls.

From cohort of male yearlings to brotherhood of bulls

While the adolescent lives of the female fighting stock are defined by the process of testing and *selección* described in the last chapter, the males of the same age are left largely to their own devices on the Partido de Resina estate. From the moment they are branded, the males live together as a cohort in their own field and start receiving their own supplementary hay. As *añojos*, between one and two years old, they are shunted to the periphery of the estate, where their only routine interactions with humans consist of daily counts from a distant horseperson or vehicle, and the more sporadic encounters with the tractor that replenishes the hay feeders as needed. Once they reach the age of two, the bullocks become *erales* and are moved again, to a larger, more central field with better grazing. By this stage, they are starting to develop more individual characteristics and Joaquín, Algora, and others begin to observe and comment on things like the way their horns are growing and their coats are turning out. At three they are *utreros* and are really coming into their own as they fill out and become recognisable as little bulls. This process is helped along by the addition of grain-based hard feed – *pienso* – to their diet.

Throughout this period the cohorts begin to take on shape as social units. From 2013 to 2015 these cohorts varied in number between twenty-two and forty. As the male animals grow up they become progressively pickier about the company they keep, forming bands and close relationships with particular fieldmates. In both the taurine literature and everyday talk amongst *aficionados* on and off the estate, this long-term group formation is referred to as *hermanandose*, which connotes a joining of forces or, more literally, a

process of becoming brothers (*hermanos*). The bulls themselves are not routinely referred to as brothers, though. Our daily checks would take these developments into account and we would count the animals according to their own sub-groups, routines, and preferences for one area or another within their allocated territory. This was not typically a subject of conversation for those people who were consistently present on the estate, rather it was precisely an effect of being there and being able to observe small changes as they occurred. When an occasional helper joined us for a morning, or when José or I had been away, there was a need to ask about any changes that had taken place. Among those of us who were not actually employed by the estate, there was a sense of wanting to keep abreast of happenings there. If a bull like number 19 had taken to turning round in the *manga*, then we needed to be aware of this so we were not caught off-guard when riding behind or in front of him. Knowing where the different groups of stock were and how the groups were constituted not only implied an insider connection to Partido de Resina and the famous pabloromero bulls, but also made us more useful and therefore more likely to be asked to assist in a core *vaquero* capacity – that is, mounted alongside Joaquín, rather than just opening and closing gates in the corrals.

In the third year of their lives, the young bulls are separated (*apartado*) into smaller lots (*lotes*[27]), decided by taking into consideration the different *empresarios* (arena impresarios/promoters) who have expressed interest in a Partido de Resina bullfight for the following year. This event – designated *el apartado* – is the last major change of companions that most of the bulls will endure before they embark for the arena, and also marks a shift in the objects of care for which Joaquín is responsible. The bulls in these lots mature together: they eat and are exercised in each other's company and then, in most cases, go to their deaths in the arena as a group. Joaquín and Algora were hesitant to change the lots after this stage because there was an increased risk of serious fighting when the social order in groups of adult bulls was disrupted. At the same time as they form intimate relationships, like that of numbers 19 and 21, and also rivalries, the animals

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Outside the world of the bulls, when speaking with my girlfriend's Spanish family for example, the use of *lote* to describe groups of bulls came across as an odd use of a technical word, which, much like the English word 'lot', typically refers to a part of an inheritance, a set of things, a batch at auction, or a plot of land. Though in English a group of animals at auction would also be referred to as a lot. The taurine community, as with other communities with a mixture of professional and non-professional fans or practicioners, is a community of language, which has its own technical vocabularly (often found prefixed in the dictionary with the word *tauromaquia* (tauromachy)).

become more independent. As a result, they move differently as a herd and become trickier to manage, and the need to be especially careful when around them increases.

We referred to each lot by its destination, which often changed over the course of the year as potential contracts with *empresarios* were mooted and then fell through. When the posters *(carteles)* which present the bulls and bullfighters for particular festivals get published and our bulls are not included, my neighbour Antonio – and others in the *pueblo* and online – would comment that the *empresarios* were not willing to bet on or support the diversity of types [of bull] ("*apostar por la diversidad de encastes"*). The pabloromero animals, as difficult beasts from a minority breeder, were seen as a risk. So at the initial *apartado* Algora might talk hopefully in terms of Madrid, Pamplona, and Málaga (Spain), or Nimes (France) which are all top tier[28] *plazas de toros*. He will select bulls mostly according to their physique: each *corrida* should ideally be harmonious and tilt towards the kind of bull the different arenas are known for[29]. He will also consider potential in terms of behaviour, though this is much more tentative as these male animals, unlike the females, will never have been tested themselves, or indeed prepared/trained in any way beyond the provision of good care and exercise. Algora must rely on his knowledge of lineage and the behavioural affordances of particular physiques.

The initial selection notwithstanding, six months down the line the Madrid group – the *ganadería* has long had a special relationship with the capital – might more realistically sit alongside groups destined for the smaller arenas in places like Corella, Navarra or Dax in France. These latter places having a strong *torista* tradition: the fans demand 'serious' bulls from a diverse range of breeders and sub-types. As I described in the previous chapter, such bulls are not what most of the elite bullfighters want to fight. According to the popular narrative, as exemplified by comments on facebook groups such as 'Hartos del Encaste Domecq' (Fed up with the Domecq Type [of bull)], this in turn puts pressure the *empresarios* who want the names of these elites on their *carteles* in order to fill the stands, 'forcing' them to choose bulls from a select few breeders. Jaime Pablo Romero, the former owner of Partido de Resina, speaking on television, expressed indignation that the

28 In Spain there are three tiers (*categorías*) of arena, differentiated by location, annual number of festivals, and the regulations governing the minimum weight of the bulls to be fought.

29 Pamplona for example is seen to demand large animals with wider set horns, whereas Madrid, although also demanding a big animal, is thought (by Algora in this case) to want a well-armed bull that hews closely to the pabloromero type. Lesser arenas cannot dictate the type to the same extent, though regional tastes still have to be taken into account.

empresarios now negotiate openly and frequently string bull-breeders along before dropping them at the last minute. He suggested that 'back in his day' the assessors from the bullrings were guests on the estate who pretty much had to take what they were given.

Each group of bulls, especially those comprised of the best third or so of this year's crop, is thus, in Joaquín and Algora's eyes, invested with hope (*ilusión*), layered with the frustration and disillusion of previous years of rejection. And if not rejection, then the ever-present spectre of poor performance, which results in a few years of exile as *empresarios* wax hot and cold when it comes to the Partido de Resina bulls. The potential of the bulls, and their concomitant value, sits with us as we hurtle between layers of barbed wire fencing. The objects we are working with and care for are, partially at least, "given shape" through our horseborne interactions with them (Harbers 2010, 145): from the full cohort of bulls, made up of individuals, to *corridas*, also made up of bulls, now more knowable because they are in smaller groups; from the *pabloromero* type, to the fighting bull as a breed spread out across different estates in Southwestern Europe and the Americas. As with breeds of horse or dog in the United Kingdom (Cassidy 2002, 124; Wanner 2016, 38) care for breed and individual – sometimes in ethnographic tension, sometimes not – is emergent in contextual, dynamic practice.

Regardless of the final destinations of the animals, for the majority of the year the centre of the estate consists of a patchwork of enclosures, each containing a band of bulls, which normally numbers between six and ten animals. Aside from the main groups, there would also be a large field for leftover bulls from the year before and one or two fields for *desechos* (residual animals who do not fit clearly into any category) and also for bulls who would end on the streets (*calles*)[30]: at events where the bulls are run through the streets or in town squares. These lots of bulls make up the estates' *corridas* (bullfights) for the year and so are the core concern of the whole enterprise at Partido de Resina. They are the focal point of Joaquín and Algora's respective caring roles as foreman and *ganadero/*representative. From late February onwards, when the European bullfighting season starts, activity on the estate is geared towards preparing the bulls for their *corridas* by feeding them up and also exercising them regularly. Manoeuvres like the one above,

30 Arguably, there is a hierarchy of care when it comes to the different lots of bulls. The animals destined for Madrid tend to be the best and most valuable ones, while those destined for second or third tier plazas are of more mixed quality. Counterintuitively, some of the street bulls are worth as much or more than the arena bulls, but they are not valued as much because the estate is in many senses focused on the bullfight first and foremost.

where we were running (*corriendo*) the Nimes lot, become a new routine element in the lives of the bulls as they are fittened up for the arena. As the date of the *corrida* nears, the intensity of exercise peaks and declines as the bulls reach a level of fitness which will, in theory, see them through the three acts of the bullfight.

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The assemblages of humans, bulls, horses, and dogs which move through the sleeves between the fields at the centre of the estate during the spring and summer are complex, dynamic entities, replete with anthropologically significant relationships and qualities; from the idea that the bulls are kinds of brothers, to the categorisation involved in the forming of the different *lotes*, to the visceral *emoción* (emotion) of galloping alongside weighty taurine bodies, which corresponds to some extent with the emotion of the running of the bulls in Pamplona. The mature bulls anchor the assemblage, each one now to some extent a known quantity, regularly referred to in conversation, but also forming a unit – *una corrida de toros* – which has a life and trajectory of its own. The lot we were moving above never ended up in Nimes. Some of the bulls ended up in Malága and some in Madrid, fought as five year olds. Other lots stayed together right until the end.

However, while these lots are being moved, it is the behaviour of the bulls, as a group or a herd, and as individuals, which informs the task at hand and the way they are managed from horseback. In this chapter I choose to focus on one element which holds such assemblages together, which is what we might call a particular kind of horsemanship or equestrian and taurine “know-how” (*saber hacer*), that is, the form of equitation known as Doma Vaquera ('Doma', if the reader recalls, coming from *'domar'*, to train/tame; 'Vaquera', being to do with cattle); so a form of equestrian training which incorporates a way of being with and knowing fighting cattle. The movements of this discipline – sliding stops (*parones*), one hundred and eighty degree pirouettes (*media vueltas*), and sudden accelerations (*arreones*) – are precisely the movements which one would employ when working with bulls both as herds and as individuals, allowing the rider to 'push' or 'herd' (*arrear*) when appropriate, or to stop and double-back if a bull should turn and charge. All these movements are difficult, requiring a high degree of training for both horse and rider: techniques on which both Joaquín and I had only a limited grasp.

Joaquín says repeatedly to the anthropologist *"No soy un caballista."* ("I'm not a horseman."), while riding a horse upon whom he relies to carry out his job as *mayoral*. He is acutely aware of his faults as a rider, although this is a difficult topic to discuss, which is why I mainly foreground the faults of Zahara and myself in this chapter. Talking about someone's equestrian and taurine knowledge is not easy face to face, particularly when it might cast doubt on one's ability to fulfil the requirements of one's profession, which is in Joaquín's case *el oficio de mayoral* (the professional office of foreman). The uneasy way Joaquín does not want to claim equestrian expertise, despite the fact that it is him who presses closest on horseback when driving the bulls forward, taking the most risk, reflects the way equitation is tied up with notions of class, masculinity, leisure *(ocio)* and work in Andalusia (Thomson 2010, 548), and the way it is embedded in a very local post-Franco history which spills over from the world of the bulls into the linked worlds of flamenco and catholic pilgrimage. Of particular relevance is the emphasis on tradition and *"valores nacionalcatólicos"* after the civil war (Macho Castro 2017, 140), as well as the subsequent economic boom which afforded an explosion in horse ownership (Thomson 2010, 549). Doma Vaquera, understood as a particularly Andalusian aesthetic and practice, is one of the linking factors between the bulls and pilgrimage. And because Andalusia and its countryside has historically been cast as a reservoir of Spanish tradition (Douglass 1997, 162), Doma Vaquera also needs to situated as representative or reconstitutive, alongside the bulls and pilgrimage, of a specific kind of Spanishness.

Doma Vaquera has an evaluative and performative aspect. It is is a competitive discipline. Pajito, while teaching students and training horses for others, is a three time national champion. His son has already won at the regional level. In competition, the movements associated with the bulls are performed without bulls, refined for public display and for the judges. In this sense, as well as simply being or not being *un caballista*, a horseman, one can be a better or worse horseman. Joaquín and myself are therefore never only or merely riding Cabezón and Zahara, we are also participating in a wider ethical field, subject to and pushing against ideas of correct technique. This in turn segues into issues of professionalism and office, specifically what Fortes (1962, 54-56) referred to as the "legitimacy" of office, conferred, for Fortes, through ceremony and ritual, but also, crucially, through "the acting of his part in accordance with the norms and sanctions that legitimize it [the office]". Thus, when I describe moving bulls, I am describing the way Joaquín's office is distributed in practice; maintained not only by "imperatives of apparel, speech, conduct

and observance" (*ibid.* 72), but also by his handling of Cabezón. His grasp of Andalusian horsemanship is complicated by the fact that the *mayoral* is in many ways by definition a horseman.

In order to better explore and contextualise Doma Vaquera and its associated evaluative side, with its inherent human-animal dimension, I go forward along the pilgrimage road, mounted on my grubby little hack.

Zahara's Protest

The Hato Blanco route to El Rocío neatly connects the strands of my fieldwork by physically linking the Partido de Resina estate, with its fighting bulls, to the pilgrimage town of El Rocío itself, twenty kilometres away. I have mostly only ridden along this route, sometimes with human company, but always with horses from the estate, with whom I am familiar. It is not the same for me on foot or in a car. The trail passes a *cortijo* (country house) with a disused bullfighting arena, as well as the Hato Blanco estate, where the Campos Peña brothers breed their famous horses and even some bulls, although they are not nearly as famous as the Partido de Resina animals. Moreover, the Coria del Rio *hermandad* (pilgrimage brotherhood) have a plot of land here, where they camp overnight on their journey to ***la*** *aldea* (**the** hamlet) of El Rocío, with their icon of the Virgin. Horses, bulls, and pilgrimage: Three overlapping elements, part of a constellation of things and practices that, locally at least, reference *cultura* (culture), *tradición* (tradition) and Andalusian-ness. It seems almost too convenient how one pilgrimage trail through a flat, dusty landscape can connect so materially the lives and experiences of a group of humans and horses as they move through the world of the bulls (*el mundo del toro*); the world of *doma vaquera*, with its livestock centred horsemanship; and the world of *el camino del Rocío,* the pilgrimage road to El Rocío.

Of course, this constellation is not always construed positively. Historically, taurine events and an imagined world of *fiestas* and *romerías* (pilgrimages), gypsies, and excess have been critiqued by Spanish liberals as representative of a problematic remnant of "*costumbre"* (custom) "dragged" into the modern age, and effecting Spain's rural productivity and potential as a European nation (McKinty 2015, 61). In the eighteenth century, enlightenment authors – the Spanish*"ilustrados"*, such as Jovellanos and Arroyal

– critiqued the bulls and pilgrimage as constituent parts of backwards Spain, which compared unfavourably to the then progressive examples of France and Italy (*ibid.* 58). Jovellanos specifically lumped the bulls, pilgrimage, and also hunting together as wasteful public diversions in his 1796 report on agricultural law (*ibid.* 80). Building on this narrative, Eugenio Noel and other reform-oriented writers of the generation of 1898 – which marked the Spanish-America war and a subsequent moment of crisis as Spain's empire crumbled – cast *"flamenquismo"* and the bulls as barriers to a twentieth century modernity (*ibid.* 142). *Flamenquismo* here representing precisely the exotic, but essentially Andalusian/Spanish, (popular) cultural assemblage revolving round "*los toreros, cantaores, bailaoras y gentes de esta laya"* ("the bullfighters, singers, dancers and people of that ilk), as described by romantic folklorists of the nineteenth century, both Spanish and foreign (Cruces Roldán 2009, 155). This narrative has not gone away, and so to ride along the Hato Blanco road is, in many ways, to ride through one Spain, that of *la "España de pandereta"* (tambourine Spain)(Douglass 1997, 103[31]), watched and critiqued by another pro-European, anti-bullfighting, anti-clerical, and 'modern' Spain.

When Joaquín came along on pilgrimage, he would have to shout at his dogs to stop them following us beyond the gates of Partido de Resina. The road along the front of the estate is tarmacked, straight, and fast; with the bulls' oak-studded fields on one side, and dense rows of fruit trees on the other. He would keep twisting in the saddle, watching the Madrid bulls for signs of nervousness, which might indicate that Mono and Mona were trying to sneak through on the far side of the fields. This time I am on my own though, so I do not have to worry about the dogs. My horse, Zahara, is my only concern.

Although she is Zahara to me, she is just *"la yegua"* (the mare) to Joaquín and Joselito. The former uninterested in her, and the latter often brutally distant, both verbally and physically, with the many horses he works with. I sometimes wonder how Joselito refers to me when I am not present. In front of the others is was distant towards me, too. In private is was more open, but also often surly: dismissive of my enthusiasm and derisive about what he perceives of as my good fortune in being allowed to work on the estate. The implication is that I, unlike him, am not there because I have skills to bring to the jobs at hand. Regardless, Zahara is the only working mare on the estate, so her gender is as

31 Citing Cambria (1974, 51).

singular as her name. It is a functional, reductive appellation, which singles out a difference and uses it as a point of reference, in the same way we refer to a young man (younger than us) who occasionally comes to help out as *"el chaval"* (the kid). Even Algora, who knows her, and the children she used to take for rides in her former home, have started calling her *la yegua* when talking to us as a group. That said, as Thomson (2017, 74-75) points out, working horsemen referring to mares by their sex, rather than by their name also reflects the wider gendered nature of the working Andalusian countryside, with sex being seen as an essential differentiator (see also Pink 1997). This notwithstanding, as is the case with Joaquín and Cabezón, sometimes saying *la yegua* or her name refers to her as *una herramienta de trabajo* (a work tool), and sometimes it refers to her as a horse-as-being, one with character faults and much to learn: "*no sabe"* ("she doesn't know") or *"no está preparada"* ("she's not ready/prepared/trained").

Zahara is a concern because she, like myself, is new to both fighting stock and pilgrimage. As I indicate above and in previous chapters, we had been managing fine with the bulls; Joaquín, in his role as foreman, was careful never to put us in genuinely tight spots. We have even been on one pilgrimage together, though that had been an informal affair: just Joaquín, José, and myself, riding Algora's white gelding (prettier than Cabezón), Bandolero, and Zahara respectively. This combination of young foreman, older *vaquero*, and anthropologist, all connected by workplace, was an unusual grouping, one not typical of the social make-up of larger pilgrimages in that it was a new, tentative group of people. Most of the *reuniones* (pilgrimage groups) have history, many even have names, emblazoned on the sides of their caravans. The *aldea* (hamlet) had been so empty during this mini pilgrimage that Joaquín and I had a thoroughly immature race round the back of town in the night, leaving the much older and wiser José in our wake, unimpressed by our lack of *estilo* (style).

This time Zahara and I are heading into the real thing: the Pentecost weekend pilgrimage. We will be sharing the main route to el Rocío – *la Raya Real* (the Royal Way) – and the streets of the hamlet itself with multiple *hermandades* (brotherhoods). There will be wagons, drawn by huge oxen and carrying icons of the Virgin *(simpecados)* set among ornate arrangements of candles, draping cloth, and flowers. There will be flautists and drummers, surrounded by dust covered women in brightly coloured and many layered flamenco dresses. There will be mules, horses, and ponies; pulling vehicles of all different

sizes, driven by people in varying states of inebriation. There will be 4x4s and tractors pulling enormous white caravans through deep sand. For us though, there will be above all lots of horses and riders. These riders will form and disband groups with a studied capriciousness, looking for *gente* (people or crowds – both in particular and in general) and *ambiente* (atmosphere) on the trail. Though they will always be loosely attached to their *hermandades*, either as outriders or a kind of rearguard. You can orient yourself on the pilgrimage road by observing the colour of the cords that held the *medallas*, pendants with an image of each brotherhoods Virgin icon, which almost every rider bore. During the Pentecost pilgrimage (***la*** *romería*) the road is one long string of overlapping brotherhoods and *reuniones*. All this chaos and colour is an awful lot to ask of a mare who has spent most of her life on estates with a small circle of human and equine aquaintances.

The popularity of the pilgrimage to El Rocío can be understood in terms of the exponential growth of Catholic brotherhoods in Sevilla and neighbouring Huelva after the Civil War, some brotherhoods linked closely to the falangist movement and the military, but this influence later being tempered by order of the cardinal in Sevilla in the 1940s (Mancha Castro 2017, 151-154). At the same time, a general reduction in inequality (Gilmore 1996, 56), meant that pilgrimage and Holy Week parades became more accessible and more flamboyant for people of modest means (see Mancha Castro 2017, 161). José's father, who lived through the war, did not go on pilgrimage, but José and most of his friends and family did. The crisis bit into the numbers of pilgrims and vehicles taking part in the

Pentecost pilgrimage, but it was and still is a massive industry, with purpose built caravans and animals raised and trained specifically for *el camino*.

Before we reach the Hato Blanco estate buildings, the road surface changes at a T-junction. The tarmac heads off towards Villamanrique at right angles to our route, which continues on as a hardcore track wide and firm enough to bear the lorries used by commerical fruit and olive exploitations in the area. This surface feels different. I worry slightly less about hugging the edge of the road, even though motorised vehicles still come by pretty fast. Zahara steps out better, sensing me relax through the reins, my seat and my legs. I notice a rebellious tuft of white forelock sticking up behind the headpiece of her bridle. I must have missed it when I gave her a quick trim to smarten her up this morning. It had all been a bit rushed and I had to use old fashioned shears like José does, and unlike his son-in-law, who advocates electric trimmers.

The serried ranks of orange trees on my left suddenly give way to open cropland, divided by deep ditches which limit and guide the annual flooding of the area: *las marismas*. The winter wet already seems a long way off. Then comes Hato Blanco. Marked by a tidy line of Eucalyptus trees and a well-kempt driveway, the Campos Peña brothers' *finca* always seems busier - more industrious – than Partido de Resina. This estate is as much an agribusiness as a breeder of horses and bulls. The fighting stock stand in fields that are more feeding lots than pasture, right there near the entrance. So visible and exposed. Silos and a tractor workshop sit next to stables and corrals. When I had first passed the gates, I had thought to myself that what it gains in terms of a diverse and modern industrial portfolio it loses in class, lacking the sleepy *señorial* feel of Partido de Resina. This was perhaps an illusion though, or a poorly informed initial impression. I later learned that the fighting stock spend part of the year out on the marshlands, roaming and grazing almost as freely as they used to in the (much romanticised) past according to Antonio, who is an agricultural worker at Hato Blanco. Moreover, through Antonio I learned that the estate draws on a slightly different fount of prestige, one that privileges the equine side of the business over the taurine side, and so in that sense the complete opposite of the institution that Partido de Resina has become since changing ownership and *mayoral*. The Morales family, Algora, and Joaquín are first and foremost fans of the bulls, and the horses at Partido de Resina therefore take on a more functional role. At Hato Blanco in contrast, although some of the animals do go to arenas off site, the fighting stock could be said to

support the stud business and the equestrian *afición* of the owners, rather than the other way around.

The horses that Ernesto Campos Peña (ECP) sells are *caballos de tres sangres* (horses from three 'bloods'), which are from a mixture of Arab (*Árabe*), Thoroughbred (*Pura Sangre Inglés: PSI*) and Andalusian (*Pura Raza Español: PRE*) blood. When I asked why these *hispano-anglo-árabe* horses make good working animals, particularly when it comes to working with bulls, the answers varied but were usually based on the argument that crossing results in animals with the best traits from each breed. Specifically, in the case of *tres sangres* horses, this was often couched in terms of in terms of nobility and valor coming from the Spanish side, and *'pies'* (feet), meaning speed and acceleration coming from the Arab and Thoroughbred side (see also Thomson 2012, 15). Via slickly presented social media posts and pages the generous, accomodating spirit of the ECP horses is underlined with photos of young foals greeting the children of the house, at liberty in the extensive fields of the *marismas*. This nobility is then (re)presented in the context of working with the fighting stock, with photos showing the horses calm and composed, listening to their riders as they canter inches in front of the horns of near mature bulls. The estate sells horses across Spain and internationally, often posting pictures of their horses in their new homes. Drawing on a vision of Doma Vaquera in a wider, modern world, they place the *vaquero* element of the horses' tack and training alongside English or classical riding elements in their presentation of the estate, unlike José with his old fashioned shears and lack of enthusiasm for snaffle bits.

Zahara, marching along beneath me as we pass the gates of Hato Blanco, is technically a *tres sangres* horse, though her breeding history is not foregrounded in the same way as the ECP horses. She does not have too much blood (*tener demasiado sangre*), which means the proportion of Thorougbred or Arab – the breeds which bring spark to the mix – is not too high in her breeding. This makes her suitable for children, or visiting anthropologists. Cabezón is the same.

As we turn onto the narrower, wooded and sandy track that connects the Hato Blanco road to the Royal Way, I recall last year's main pilgrimage (*romería*). Nogales had kindly insisted that I take Capricho, his chesnut Anglo-Arab, despite or rather because of the blood/breeding of the horse. Capricho carried the brand of a prestigious stud. He put on

inches when mounted, increasing in apparent size, and walked out very well. Although he too had sweet-itch, his bearing and a few well-placed plaits masked this and he stood out as a good-looking horse: *un caballo guapo*.

Capricho came with a reputation though. Nogales had taken him on precisely because he was proving difficult at Partido de Resina. He lived up to his name, 'capriciously' protesting and throwing his rider when he got worked up about a situation or separation from his stablemates. He did not fully submit to his rider, something unthinkable in a working context: something genuinely dangerous. Joselito had had his doubts about Capricho and me from the start, expressing his concerns through direct mutterings about *el alazano* (the chestnut) having “too much blood”. Over the months leading up to the *romería*, Capricho and I had worked on keeping things together. Nogales pushed us both, making us exercise in the deep soil of recently ploughed fields and urging me to regularly ride Capricho from his yard to his house for lunch, covering in a few hours a distance which during pilgrimage would be covered in a day. There was more to this than just exercising-to-settle; the idea was to consistently put Capricho and me in new situations, so as to develop a rapport (*compenetración*) and confidence (*confianza*) between us. Similarly, Joaquín had spent some time riding the white gelding he took on pilgrimage in the preceding weeks.

For Capricho and me, it had all fallen apart when we had set out from Gines, four days out from el Rocío. Too much, too soon. Pilgrimage involves constant pauses to greet friends and aquaintances, interspersed with periods of movement. Capricho's security is all in forward motion, so this persistent stopping had brought out the worst in him and his pawing, then rearing protests had escalated to the point where I had to decide to take him home, despite Nogales' insistence that it would be alright in the end. Displays of equestrian prowess take place on a regular basis among the riders on pilgrimage, but rather than being about riding through whatever the horses throw at their riders, in this context it is about complete control in a crowded environment: the energy of the horse channelled into tight pirouettes, sudden gallops, and sliding stops, which, of course, are all the movements that are important when moving around fighting stock. Capricho and I had stood out for all the wrong reasons, which is why preparation is considered so important.

Zahara and I catch up with our first brotherhood on the single-track lane between Hato Blanco and the Royal Way. One moment we are walking pretty much alone and in silence, only having to watch out for the odd glass bottle in the sand. Then the next we are at the back of a noisy, slow-moving queue of animal traction and festivity. Zahara perks up; she can see and hear the horses beyond the back of the first wagon, whose occupants are hidden behind heavy twill curtains in Spain's national red and yellow - each representation of these colours a distant echo of the national project of recatholicisation after the Civil War. The back of the wagon is open below the *rojigualda* material, revealing a confusion of dusty boots and many-layered flamenco dresses, resting on bright blue cool boxes. Somebody calls out from within: a man, asking if I would like a beer.

I have no idea who these people are, or what *hermandad* they are from, but offering refreshments to other pilgrims – even complete strangers – is a reflection of the common purpose of the pilgrimage community. Vehicles are moving centres of hospitality and solidarity, funded by the *reuniones* (groups of friends and/or family). Revolving about these centres are the walkers and riders, who form their own overlapping groups, all accompanying a particular town's image of the Virgin Mary. I am at the tail end of a repeating structure of people, animals, and vehicles, which stretches from this particular offshoot of the main pilgrimage road all the way to el Rocío and the hermitage itself. The hospitable stranger - who was not really a stranger by virtue of his place in the larger structure of the pilgrimage road - would be the first of many today.

But this time, when the hand of hospitality thrusts through the curtains of the wagon, it is not well received. I might be prepared for the sudden appearance of a *botellín* of Cruzcampo beer, but Zahara is not. From her perspective – level with the wagon seats – something has leapt out at her from above, emerging with no warning from the creaking, gently moving structure on our right.

She goes up, down, and sideways all at once. In a flash the outstretched hand is fifteen meters distant and we are bucking, rearing and whirling on the track behind the wagon. Saddlebags and blankets flap. Dust billows out. I try to convey both reassurance and authority to her, while also trying not to fall off. I know my legs and hands need to remain steady and in control, but we are all over the place. That little bottle of beer is visible out of

the corner of my eye every time we spin round, and the curious, concerned faces that have joined it, poking out.

Abruptly four legs hit the ground and stay there. All the mad energy dissipates and Zahara feels as she usually does: alert, but more or less with me. We walk on, sidle over to the wagon and take the beer without issue. I make noises about this being Zahara's first *romería*, but the conversation quickly moves on to brotherhoods and pilgrimage more generally. There is not sufficient *confianza* (confidence/familiarity) between us to talk about something so sensitive as my horsemanship and Zahara's readiness for the pilgrimage environment, particulary as our combined preparedness is now manifestly in doubt.

The incident – Zahara's protest – sits with me as I ride on down the line, looking for the familiar faces of my own *reunión*. It had not been something completely out of character. This is exactly the reason Joselito would not ride her in front of the cameras. It is also the reason why she could not work too close to the bulls. A moment of protest like that in front of an oncoming bull would end catastrophically. Sometimes even horses and riders who have it together are caught, such as Capitán *"el caballo valiente"* (the brave horse) who had been caught during filming for the 'Toros para Todos' (Bulls for Everyone) series on another estate.

Zahara feels relatively relaxed now though, resigned to moving forwards through the noise and the chaos. We join José Nogales and his family at the lunch stop *(sesteo)* on the Royal Way. Zahara ends up happily sandwiched between two big bay horses in the shade of some eucalyptus trees. She looks like a child's pony. I doze under the canopy of the caravan with a beer bottle, not sure how to write up this morning's tantrum/encounter.

As the *hermandades* start to hitch up and move out, Zahara and I go looking for Pajito, the man who was giving me Doma Vaquera lessons in Villamanrique, and who used to work on Partido de Resina. Gines moves out before Villamanrique, so we ride into the relaxed, post-prandial atmosphere of the latter town's *sesteo* encampment. There are bottles of rum, gin, and whisky, as well as jugs of *rebujito* (sherry and lemonade) on the long tables next to the neatly lined up *reunión* caravans. Some people sleep in camping recliners, others move between groups, greeting friends and aquaintances. Pajito's section exudes equestrian and flamenco tradition. Everyone is wearing either a full *traje corto* or *flamenco*

(suit or dress), and his daughter Cristina is singing as I approach. A plastic garden chair is pushed out for me and I dismount to join them, Zahara standing behind and above me on the edge of the circle. I cannot work out how everyone else manages to avoid the horses drooling on their white sleeves and collars.

At first I had thought that Pajito's family were quite well off and had been for some time. He was a three time national champion of Doma Vaquera and managed a whole yard of expensive horses. Both the horses and the riders were presented impeccably for pilgrimages, exhibitions, and competitions. I knew that he had grown up on the Partido de Resina estate and that his father had been a *vaquero* there. But it was only later on that I found out he was in many ways a self-made man, who had amassed prestige and respect through his talent with horses, particularly Israel, the pure Thoroughbred with whom Pajito first took the championship. Israel's stuffed head now hangs in a tack shop in El Rocío, testament to his enduring status as a legendary horse in the Doma Vaquera world. In the village there was some pride in Pajito's achievements, particularly as his family background was often described as *humilde* (humble/modest). He was a man who had taken advantage of new wealth in the area, taking money in exchange for training and sometimes stabling the horses which people took on pilgrimage.

Horses travel faster than the wagons that bear each town's Virgin, so we are in no hurry to move out, even as Villamanrique's drums and flutes start up on the other side of the caravans. Eventually though, we do mount up and, as we move out onto the now much wider sandy track, other riders join us, including Vicente Bernal, a singer and *manriqueño* of rising fame. Pajito's brothers are also about, some of their daughters riding their own horses, others riding on the croup of their fathers' horses. A male friend drives the wagon that carries Antonia (Pajito's wife) and her friends, as well as snacks and drinks. When we stop, the driver steps down among the horses – large, sweating, iron shod animals – and refills our drinks. Or we crab in close to the wagon so the people within can hand us refreshments. There are several vehicles moving along and stopping together now, and the number of riders rises and falls, constantly changing. Always growing when Vicente starts playing his guitar and we gather round. But the core group remains the same.

Zahara does well, there are no more protests. Though I can feel expert eyes on her every time we halt, turn or rein back. I had not mentioned the incident to anyone. Skill and good

etiquette are in the details: in making room for other riders and people on foot, or in bringing your horse's hindquarters close against the vehicle to exchange a kiss or a handshake. A jerking, clumsy halt is visible to everyone. It does not surprise me that Joaquín is funny about riding in public.

Occasionally someone will break off from the group and work a frustrated horse before things go too far, finding space to canter, pirouette and do sudden halts in the sand. In these moments, out of earshot of the riders of these horses, it is often mentioned that the pilgrimage road is not the space for spirited horses. You want a horse that will allow you to "have a good time" *(pasarlo bien)*, as well as being good-looking. I am acutely aware that Zahara is not quite either of these things. If I press anyone on this tension or any other I get told that everyone does as they like: the potential for conflict and the idea that *protagonismo* (individual showing off) might be a problem are both downplayed.

I am also aware that this is the kind of experience of *el camino* – the pilgrimage road – that is sought after: the kind of experience that is enshrined in the *sevillanas rocieras* that are sung throughout the journey. Here are *ambiente* (atmosphere), *arte* (skill/something beautiful), and *estilo* (style). We are one among many groups between the pine trees, but we are a centre too. Vicente and Pajito, with their humble backgrounds (one the son of a *manriqueño* bartender, the other the son of a *manriqueño* cowhand), are known figures in this world, even among other *hermandades*. Our group captures something of an *aire flamenco/rociero*, a flamenco or pilgrimage atmosphere. The very *flamenquismo* critiqued by a part of enlightenment, post-imperial, and Europe-oriented Spain.

Zooming out, Zahara and I are riding through a patchwork of *reuniones*; merging with one, responding by moving aside for another. We are deploying some of the same skills and manoeuvres we do among the different groups of bulls. Sudden stops or accelerations serve just as well to move out of the line of travel of either a carriage or a bull. Every time I swing up into a saddle on Zahara's back, all the places and experiences we have lived together fold into one another and become one history. On the pilgrimage road I know how she will respond to an overenthusiastic spur from a standing start because we have had to slip straight into a canter dozens of times in front of the steers to lead the bulls out of their fields. Her chucking up her head and fighting my hands would not be desirable in either context.

It is from the saddle that some of the links between the world of the bulls and the world of pilgrimage become apparent in this chapter. The horses – with concomitant forms of horsemanship – directly connect the two spaces, united in the way they defy the other Spain. Every other horse-human pairing will also carry a history of connections and shared experiences. Francisco José, Pajito's son, rides Crocodrilo, ex-champion of Spain. Nogales rides Bandolero, another horse who has worked with the *pabloromero* bulls. Antonio Diaz, Pajito's brother, rides a horse he uses to round up the late Duchess of Alba's cattle. Others ride horses kept at yard's like Pajito's and ridden just once a year for the *romería*.

The convenient way the pilgrimage road brings together the different elements of my fieldwork experience – bull-breeding, horsemanship, Andalusian Mariology – is rooted in more than geographical happenstance. Through horse and rider relationships the world of the bulls, or rather this particular corner of the world of the bulls, leaks into the world of el Rocío. And *vice versa*. This connection goes deeper though, because horsemanship leaks into questions of class and wealth too. Good movement among bulls and good movement among pilgrims is judged within a similar, or at least an overlapping, framework, and references both time invested and the idea of being born into this world, or not. One rider, himself originally of a humble background confided in me that Joaquín would never have *estilo* (style), even if he could overcome his pride and take lessons like I did; "*estilo"* here a cypher for class, preparedness and upbringing.

There are issues of control and presentation. These are not spaces for protest. Horses can have blood or spark, they can be impressive, but this blood cannot spill over into ugly, uncontrolled outbursts. There is a sense which this controlled display also feeds into the idea of *cumpliendo*, that is the idea of fulfilling one's obligations to one's friends and family or doing the right thing by them. In the case of the bulls, every rider has to be in the right place. In the case of the pilgrimage, an untimely equine protest draws the wrong kind of attention to the whole group, which is an object of care itself, not unlike a *corrida* of bulls. Each *reunión* and each *hermandad* plans all year long for the pilgrimage week. Once on the road, the constant stopping and moving-on is not just about socialising, but also about maintaining the position of the group relative to the icons of the Virgin Mary and making sure that the party does not get strung out. We are not quite herded like bulls, but the

sensation is not far off. Both the patchwork of bull enclosures and the patchwork of pilgrimage *reuniones* are potentially chaotic spaces which need careful management. This management is achieved both through unspoken forms and rules of sociality, and through direct leadership by a *mayoral* (foreman) or *alcalde de la carreta* (literally, mayor of the wagon).

Cantering with skill on a good hack

Every moment I describe on horseback, in this chapter and across the thesis, echoes the tensions identified in the above set of connecting stories. It might seem that we are invisible to the wider world when Joaquín, Joselito, and myself ride our working horses – our *jacos buenos* – behind and in front of a *corrida* of bulls like the Nimes lot. Yet this is not the case; sometimes there are even cameras from documentary crews, or groups of tourists in the wagon. But even when we are alone in the fields, just us and the animals, we are riding in a style – Doma Vaquera – which ties us to ideas of Andalusian and Spanish distinctiveness, rooted in a history of folklorist and anthropological reification, as well as the renaissance and remaking of national-catholic tradition and values after the Civil War. Each relationship between horse (tools and beings-who-protest) and rider (skilled and not) reflect and reproduce wider histories and concerns. Being or not being a horseman (*caballista*) is important for Joaquín and all the others who ride in these contexts.

Chapter V - “No hay quinto malo”: There's no bad fifth bull

"Aromas de los caminos
que perfumáis a mis sueños
y son de tamborileros
que vivís en mis adentros
eucaliptos de la raya
perfumando mis recuerdos.
Los romerales del coto
girasoles del sendero
se sienten muy orgullosos
de adornarte a ti el sombrero.
Virgen de los peregrinos
mayorales y pateros
la de viejas manriqueñas
y bravíos almonteños.”

“Scents of the pilgrimage ways
which perfume my dreams
and sound of the drummers
which live in my insides
eucalyptus of the route
perfuming my memories.
The rosemary patches of the reserve
sunflowers of the track
feel very proud
to adorn your hat.
Virgin of the pilgrims
foremen and duck hunters
of the old ladies of Villamanrique
and the untameable men of Almonte.”

“A hundred steps to the hamlet” (“Cien pisadas hasta la aldea”)
by José Leon, translated by author.

Courtyard, Partido de Resina estate, September

It is nearly September, the surrounding towns are quiet, the beaches on the other side of the marshes are full, and on the estate everything is in place for the upcoming bullfights. The uncertainty of not-quite-fully-formalised agreements with arena *empresarios* is replaced with the constant tension of holding together the lots of bulls and trying to avoid injuries or *bajas* (deaths) at all costs. The potential within each bull is delicate, easily destroyed with brash handling. In the countryside, the Sevillan summer bakes everything equally; a slow, dead heat that leaves only the late evening and early morning barely tolerable. From eleven o'clock onwards it is a question of waiting and enduring. The bulls are lethargic, lying in the shade in loose clusters, while the dogs give up and go back to the shade of the courtyard before we finish our rounds. There are no protests from the horses when we bathe them with lukewarm water afterwards. They do not even trot out to their field when we release them, opting instead to saunter out, twitching their manes as the flies try to settle and sniffing half-heartedly at dry vegetation by the gate.

Although pre-*corrida* tension is distributed across the different people involved in caring for the bulls, I felt it particularly keenly through Joaquín, whose relative youth and newness to the role of foreman meant that at the time he still felt insecure. Each new bullfight was effectively a test of his ability as foreman, that is to say, a test of the "legitimacy" of his occupation of *el oficio de mayoral* (Fortes 1962, 54). As he emphasised, he would be the one to take the blame both publicly and privately if the bulls were not presented correctly. He felt that the burden of getting the animals to the arena entrance in one piece and in good condition fell largely on him. It was not that he really believed that it was entirely his responsibility, but that he reckoned that if things went wrong – or more specifically if the bulls turned out particularly poorly - his employment was the one at risk. In terms of the "contingent relations and interactions" (Laidlaw 2010, 146) at stake when it comes to the assignation of blame and responsibility here the bulls, their individual and collective potential, and the hope invested in them are central. Once the entire *corrida* was safely in their individual pens in the arena, it all came down to their yet-to-be-revealed individual and innate qualities. In more bitter moments, when something was not working and he had to fix it, even if he thought that such work was "beneath the dignity of the role" (*"no es digno del puesto"*) of foreman, he would say that all the credit for good bulls would go to the bull breeder, while it would be him who would be blamed if things went badly. Algora

would not agree, of course, being less focused on the work of the *mayoral* and more focused on his own work to improve the whole *pabloromero* lineage in line with modern tauromachy.

There was always the possibility, however faint, of a triumph, though. This was hardly ever mentioned, but from talking to my neighbours in Villamanrique about past triumphs it was evident that a good outcome for even one bull – perhaps with the cutting of one or two ears as trophies and markers of triumph – would transform the fortunes of the estate and give Algora and Joaquín momentum to go forward. If a *corrida* of bulls was a success, Joaquín might be carried out of the arena on shoulders. So, given this possibility and given the need to rise to the occasion, for his debut in Madrid in 2014 (as foreman), a new *traje corto* (formal working clothes/suit) was in order. He had held the post for a couple of years by this point, but the Madrid *corrida* was on another level and signified a milestone for Joaquín: one that he had dared to imagine only once he had acceded to the office of *mayoral*.

The question of the appropriate attire for a foreman brings to mind a conversation I had with Joaquín two years after these events, in 2016, when he looked back and laughed at these moments of naïveté. He recalled the first time he had accompanied fighting stock to an event as foreman. He had only been in the post for a short time, despite having spent nearly ten years shovelling feed and repairing fences on the estate. The bullfight was a minor one, being located in Portugal and, what was more, in a third-tier plaza. He had climbed up into the lorry not knowing what to expect, with a new *traje* and freshly ironed shirt, his mother waving him off. He recounted that he had felt overdressed, but remembered how the lorry driver had been just another young man from the *pueblos*, the local towns: someone with whom he could relate, that is *una persona normal*. As well as an appreciation for how his approach to low-level events had changed, in this conversation Joaquín also highlighted how he had become reconciled to the idea that the role of the *mayoral* (foreman) depended on the estate and the circumstances within which he or she found themselves working. Yes, the ideal was to spend as much time as possible with the bulls, getting to **know** (*conocer*) them, as the *conocedor*, the one who knows [them]. But at the same time, the job also meant adapting to the conditions at hand and doing what was needed to ensure the smooth running of the estate, and, with that, to ensure the care of the bulls. Even if the latter meant going back to repairing fences or putting feed out

(though he would only tolerate doing these menial jobs to a point – he drew the line at mowing the lawn in front of the main house, for example).

A new suit meant a trip to El Rocío, and the flamenco and country clothing shops there. There were other places he might have gone – Sevilla or one of the bigger *pueblos* – but El Rocío was not only closer; it was also, as I mentioned above, a centre of the working, countryside equestrian aesthetic of Doma Vaquera (see Thomson 2017), and thus a place where a foreman could clothe himself. We set aside an evening and went together in Joaquín's car. I provided company, but perhaps also, I suspect, an opinion which he did not have to worry about. As a *guiri*, a foreigner, I might not judge his choice – or the process of making a choice - in the same way as his other friends. Knowing Joaquín's taste for tight fitting shirts and fancy accessories, I was slightly nervous with regard to what kind of *traje* he would choose. In the dressing rooms the right words would not come out – I could not quite articulate my feelings for fear of offending. The foreman caught the anthropologist off guard in this case, though, by suggesting we look for something that conveyed the dignity of his post (once again *"algo digno del puesto"*): something straightforward, simple, and workmanlike. He emerged in a grey suit, the tightness round his thighs, waist, and shoulders making him suddenly look both exposed and constrained at once; oddly vulnerable and out of context. It struck me that I had never seen him in formal dress as foreman of the estate. He liked the snug fit of the suit, though.

The road to Madrid

The weeks preceding the major *corridas* (bullfights) of the year at Partido de Resina are intense. Every time a single bull, or a *corrida* of bulls leaves the estate for the arena they are subject to public and professional scrutiny as standard-bearers for the Partido de Resina lineage. They are written about by professional taurine critics writing in the culture sections of the national press. Friends and family who attend the events phone home so everyone in the *pueblos* who has the slightest interest in their local bulls knows whether or not they have once again sallied disastrously.

The brand on their hindquarters references not only the hopes of the current management, but also the emotional investment of the *afición* (fanbase) in the legacy of the former owners - the Pablo Romero family - as producers of *corridas duras* (hard bulls/bullfights).

The intensity of this run-up to the big events is unmitigated by the fact that Joaquín and Algora can only do so much in terms of preparation before the animals embark for their destined *plaza de toros*. During the days before *el embarcamiento* (the loading of the bulls for transportation) the bulls are largely left to their own devices, although the will have to come in to the corrals once to remove the sheathes we put on their horns to protect the bulls from one another after their separation into *lotes.* If they are not fat and fit by this point there are limited options: swapping new bulls into the selection is a possibility, but could bring separate contractual complications. The exercising of the bulls is scaled back. The looming bullfight means that an injury or upset while running the bulls through the tracks between enclosures could have serious consequences because there would not be sufficient time for affected animals to recover.

By this stage, the *carteles* (posters showing the line-up of bullfighters and bulls) have been published and the *corrida* is official. If the bullfight is important or carries special interest, then one of the big bull magazines or television programmes might do a special preview of the bulls 'at home' in the countryside. This was the case for Partido de Resina's September 2014 bullfight in Madrid, which was part of the *encastes minoritarios* (minority types) series of events for types of bulls which are outwith the mainstream. Aplausos – a leading taurine monthly – published a double-page spread with photos of Joaquín exercising some of the earmarked bulls on horseback. If the bullfight is less important and is being fought in a third-tier *plaza* then a taurine blogger (usually, but not always, known by someone at the estate) might be shown the animals and allowed to post photos online to build up anticipation. Partido de Resina's September 2014 consignment of bulls for Saint's Day celebrations in Corella, Navarra fitted into the latter category of lesser events, which although not as prestigious, allow the estate to sell bulls which are not serious enough, or not sufficiently representative of the pabloromero type, for first tier *plazas* like Madrid.

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In this chapter, we reach the apogee of the life cycle of the fighting bull. This moment is ethnographically salient: definitive of the kind of creatures that fighting bulls are. Each four- or five-year-old animal's fifteen minutes in the arena rolls up and exceeds all that comes before and all that comes after. The *corridas* of bulls have, up until this point, been in

hand, on the estate, but now they are to leave the estate and become subject to the wider gaze of critics and taurine *aficionados*. In the case of Partido de Resina, and particularly the 2014 Madrid bullfight, hope for the *encaste* and Joaquín's hope – the *ilusión* he has invested into his promotion – collapse into one another in the bodies of the *pabloromero* bulls heading to the capital. Algora, still personally enigmatic to me, a giver of taurine books and dispenser of snippets of knowledge, will attend with his little notebook, playing a role not so different to the one he plays in the *plaza de tienta* on the estate: scoring the bulls, and considering their lineage and how they fit into the past and future of the estate. Joaquín, closer to me, will attend with a sense that his own future is intimately tied up with the performance of his charges.

As I go forward with the description of the run up to the Madrid *corrida* and the event itself, I bring in more voices. Principally, I introduce the disembodied critiques of professional commentators and enthusiastic bloggers, in the form of chunks of quoted text which reduce the bulls we have come to know to a series of adjectives, poured over obsessively by Joaquín as I drove him home. It is in this chapter that we really begin to see how the bulls are at once – contextually, ethnographically – beasts we encounter, creatures of face-to-face interaction, made in entanglement with human others, and also other kinds of entity, stretching beyond the lives of individual animals into family lineages and bull-breeding estate trajectories, as well as the professional lives of young men like Joaquín. To quote Hans Harbers:

> "What humans are, and what animals are (person, property, machine, creature with consciousness or feeling – whatever) is not predefined but is given shape in [the course of] interaction"
>
> (Harbers, 2010:145)

The bullfight, as Mitchell (1991) has argued, is subject to a surfeit scholarly interpretations – for example, as 'cultural performance' in Marvin (1988) or as marker of a particular kind of 'Spanishness' in Douglass (1997). In this thesis, however, the *corrida* itself is not an event in need of translation or interpretation. Rather, after Actor-Network Theory (Law & Hassard 1999), after Posthumanism (Haraway 2008) and the multispecies turn (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010; Ogden, Hall & Tanita 2013; Locke & Münster 2015), and after the anthropology of ethics (Lambek 2010; Faubion 2011), the arena becomes a series of

encounters, informing the kinds of being and entity which go in and come out: *toros*, *corridas*, *encastes* and *ganaderías* (bull-breeding estates). And how those beings and entities impinge on and shape the professional – by definition ethical – life of my key informant Joaquín.

Promise

The trip to get a *traje corto* for Joaquín was to be the first of two visits to the hamlet before the September bullfights. The second was an informal, walking pilgrimage to see the Virgin of El Rocío Herself. A pilgrimage which, given its timing, signalled to an even greater extent the importance of the upcoming events and the emotional load which Joaquín was under. It also underlined the felt potential of the designated bulls, that is that within these animals there were real possibilities for both the estate and for Joaquín. Walking put the pilgrimage in a category distinct from the big group pilgrimages we had previously done. We were not going just for fun, although initially, when Joaquín proposed the trip, he suggested that it would be 'relaxing'. Rather we were going *de promesa*, fulfilling a promise shared only between the Virgin [Mary] and, in this case, Joaquín, a young man from Villamanrique de la Condesa and, crucially, now foreman to the pabloromero bulls. Joaquín was explicit about the privacy of the agreement or arrangement between him and the Virgin (*Ella*). That said, the fact that we were going on pilgrimage was public knowledge (at least on social media and in terms of Joaquín's friends and family) and he made sure to tweet a photo of himself on the trail with a caption specifically noting that he was on pilgrimage '*de promesa*'. Fleeting moments of playing to the gallery, ambiguously referencing debates about faith and the lack of it: sincerity or *postureo*?

The *tuit* was just a punctuation point, though: the road itself was drawn out, providing a different kind of space for viewing oneself. Joaquín commented self-consciously on the long silences and the moments of reflection afforded by the stretches of deep sand. The moments of quiet were not unlike the hours we spent among the bulls and cows together, but when we talked the atmosphere was different, almost confessional. The distance from the estate, with its responsibilities and the ever-nagging presence of the stock, made the tone of conversation more intimate, less guarded. Something of which we were both aware.

His father had provided two walking canes for us, one with the coveted rounded root at the bottom. We carried little rucksacks and snacks. I had found some caramelised almonds, which seemed appropriate to me, though he stuck with bread from the village and supermarket chorizo. On the hard standing before we reached the sands, Joaquín complained of the pains in his feet at regular intervals. Although he did not often do the pilgrimage on foot, there was a sense that he was, or rather we were, suffering within an idiom. Even if it went unsaid, it was understood what we were doing. This was not a pilgrimage or Catholic procession in the collective sense, with the pomp, splendour, and overt politics of the *hermandades* (see Mancho Castro 2017). Although the rhetoric of Catholic suffering resonated. This being in the case of the Pentecost pilgrimage the suffering of the pilgrims who walk with the images of the Virgin in particular, choking on the dust stirred up by the cart and feet of devotees. The Holy Week celebrations in Villamanrique and all around echoed this with their emphasis on the processions described so aptly as *Estaciones de Penitencia* (literally Penitence Stations). Joaquín's version of pilgrimage and punishment was more intimate, and was a model readily recognisable in Villamanrique: that of men or women alone or in groups fulfilling their part of some kind of private agreement with the Virgin.

The bulls came up constantly as we walked. Or rather, more specifically, ***la*** *corrida* – the group of bulls going to Madrid - came up constantly. The selection shifted as Joaquín thought aloud about each one, swapping them in and out based on their current status and some recent injuries. “We have other bulls.” he said, not very convincingly. With two full bullfights coming up, suddenly the cohort of less than forty adult bulls – many whom had already gone – seemed small; the patchwork of enclosures back on the estate relatively empty. There was no doubt in my mind that the animals in question – and their destination in the capital – were an intimate part of Joaquín's promise to la Virgen, but at the time there was no possibility of pressing him for more information. There was, however, plenty suggested by the way he put the emphasis on it being a secret promise and in the direct juxtaposition of the 'promise' pilgrimage with the Madrid event. Later on, though, he readily admitted the connection, stating that the debut in Madrid was something he had aspired to from the beginning, a moment marking the fact that, in some sense, he had *“llegado”* (“arrived”) as *mayoral*. The pilgrimage in turn marked his appreciation of the help of the Virgin.

As we went along, he enthused about number 26, the bull in whom he had most confidence, and then switched to brooding for the next few hundred metres:

“How he walks!” Joaquín would say when we checked on the *corrida*, noting how the bull's head and neck moved freely relative to his body. It was only later that his word choice *“descolgao*” and his explanation – which involved a telephone – made sense, connoting the loose, dangling connection between head and trunk. “My bull.”, he emphasised. The hope was that this physique and way of going would translate into a bull that could easily lower his head – *humillarse* or submit – when charging the trick of the cloth.

However, never far away in the Madrid enclosure were numbers 19 (our old friend) and 37; bulls who were erratic, alert, and constantly threatening the horses or the Toyota. “[He's] not going to be *noble*” would come the comment, as we watched number 37 stare at us and then suddenly swing round to rejoin the herd. *Noble* meaning in this case constancy in the cape. The potential for a triumph was always there, but if there were indications of good characteristics among the animals, there were also indications – little behavioural quirks or ways of moving – which suggested the opposite.

Number 37 was excluded from the squad that Joaquín outlined on the pilgrimage road. As he listed a series of numbers (not the bulls that actually ended up in the ring later that month), a history of encounters came to mind: images of bulls in particular circumstances. Numbers 19 (*“cuidado con el diecinueve”* - “careful with number nineteen”) and 21, always together. Number 9, standing alone in the corner of the field for days after fighting with his brothers, his body scored by their horns. 14 and 4, older bulls, in the field with the five-year olds, much photographed and retweeted “jewels of the taurine countryside”. Numbers 31, 54, & 51, from *el cercado de los franceses*, the enclosure with the bulls which had been destined for Nimes in France, the good looking *cárdenos* (grey roans) we exercised in the previous chapter.

A unified, harmonious *corrida* it was not. If it felt pulled together at the last minute for me, what did Joaquín feel as he shared the list with me among the pine trees and beer bottles of the road to El Rocío?

El embarcamiento

It rained when we brought the bulls in to unsheath their horns, days before they embarked for Madrid. Bulls and men alike slipped about on the thin layer of mud that built up on the dry ground of the corrals. The close proximity of the animals while they were in the stocks was disconcerting, their steaming bodies and wet nostrils vulnerable as we stripped back the plaster casts holding on the caps on their *armas* (weapons), removing their ear-tags at the same time. This was transformative act, the ear-tags going into a plastic sleeve with the papers, destined for the plaza officials. In the fields, the bulls had seemed untouchable: distant. Here, we could lay hands on them at will, albeit always taking care not to put our fingers between heavy, shifting muscle and the rusty fixings of *el cajón* (the crate). The bulls seemed especially delicate in the sense that this was a moment of risk: an enraged *toro bravo* with newly naked horns might easily make itself unfightable by charging a door or wall. Or they might scrap among themselves in the corrals, and undo with injury all the months – years – of preparation. They were completely out of context, neither in the field, nor in the arena, in a dangerous, liminal space.

The day of the *encierro* (rounding up) and *embarcamiento* (loading) was dry, at least. Up until that point, I had not heard Joaquín use the term *encierro* so formally, referring to the bringing of a *corrida* of bulls into the corrals. *"Encierro"*, coming from his mouth, had an

event-like quality; connotations of public bull-runnings, events held all over Spain involving the running of bulls from corrals on the outside of villages or towns to an arena. This impression was reinforced when I saw the amount of people who had come to see the bulls be enclosed, one by one, and embarked onto the waiting lorry. The Morales family were there, almost in their entirety, with many friends. Joaquín's family too. All standing together, but with an obvious, if polite, distance between them on the walkways above the complex of doors and enclosures that led to the loading bay. *Señores* in their chinos and moccasins got in Joaquín's way as much as his sister and young nephew, held up so he could see the bulls down below.

The animals went from covered individual cells, through the sorting alley, out into their crates on the lorry via a partitioned chute. The doors slid shut behind them, thudding or crashing into place depending on their state of repair, marking the passage of the bulls through the system. Positioned at the last partition before the lorry, I could follow the progress of each *toro* by watching the movements of the men in charge of each post, as José had told me. They would start closing their gates even before the bull had fully passed. The rest of the audience were one step behind, rushing to catch up as the animals moved through from one enclosure to the next. There was a slit in the concrete at my feet, through which I could glimpse horns, then muscled neck and back, and finally the tail, before bringing down my partition. You have to operate the entrance points fast, but in a controlled manner. The weighted doors might cripple a bull if brought down hard on his spine. If the animal balks for whatever reason, and backs up, you want him to encounter something solid and unyielding behind him, so he has no option but to move forward again. Occasionally, when one bull stops, refusing to move on, we have to carefully deploy a prod or rag on the end of a long stick, urging or luring the animal on according to its position and response. “Heating up” the bull too much would only increase the risk of injury or damage, and make him more intransigent. Even just moving the bulls through the infrastructure of the corrals, sorting avenue, and loading bay involved an intimate feel for the way bulls apprehend the world.

With each new bull, the lorry creeps forwards, lining up the next crate with the chute exit. In less than half an hour they are all on board; we have moved each bull and now the entire *corrida*. The last crate is reserved for the bulls' mix of grain and hay, divided up into easily handled white sacks, each fastened with black baler twine. Documents and ear tags

go in too. And the foreman, who has changed into street clothes and is carrying his suit and hat in protective cases. The whole unit moves out of the yard without much fanfare, taking Joaquín's authority and tension with it.

The estate felt empty without the foreman and with the sudden absence of a significant portion of 2014's best bulls. The animals for the Corella *corrida* later on in September were hidden round the back, in a field that dipped below the rest. The other enclosures contained drips and drabs; a pair of five-year olds there, three four-year olds here. We went through the daily routine with the Madrid lot in our minds, waiting for news from Joaquín or Algora.

When we did hear something, it was not good. During the first *reconocimiento* of the bull, where they are vetted and otherwise assessed for their suitability for the bullfight, several bulls were rejected and the *corrida* was now incomplete. Number 26, Joaquín's favourite, was apparently too thin. We were not able to weigh the bulls on the estate. Number 37 was lame. We were not given much detail of the process, but told to bring in replacements and prepare them for immediate transportation. This was no longer even close to the tight group of bull brothers, with complementing looks and quality, it was supposed to be. It was now a question of simply getting a group of adequately presented bulls to the arena and in front of the public: making up a full *corrida*. I could only imagine Joaquín's desperation as his debut threatened to crumble in front of him.

Madrid

There was no need to take any working clothes up to Madrid. Access to the bulls in the plaza corrals was strictly controlled and I was not going to be handling any stock. I did not have the courage to ask Joaquín to slip me in before the second *reconocimiento* (recognising) of the bulls, as became the norm at later bullfights during my fieldwork. Las Ventas is the apex of seriousness and formality in the bullfighting world. I felt insignificant, marginalised by the public gaze, which felt more imposing, more apparent, than it did on the estate. Joaquín and Algora slotted into their roles as foreman and representative; Tico Morales into his role as proprietor. There were journalists and famous faces. I was not sure what I was supposed to be doing here as an anthropologist.

I was happy to spend some time with my girlfriend though. We booked into the same, very basic hotel as the foreman, whose accommodation was paid for by the Morales family. All the news about the animals felt distant, second hand. Precious even. We were now just members of an interested public, no longer privy to the secrets of the bulls, but desperate to know. How were they? Were they eating? Were they stressed? Had they lost lots of weight during transportation? Had there been any injuries? Joaquín could put food and water in front of them, but they might not eat or drink because of the stress caused by the sudden change of environment. He had even brought along water from Partido de Resina, in case the taste would make them more inclined to drink.

Joaquín tweeted a photo of himself with number 9 in the corrals, apparently sharing an intimate moment over the top of a barrier. It was an instant hit.

Finally, on the morning of the 21st of September, there was a *corrida* - six pabloromero bulls for José María Lázaro, Pérez Mota, and Rubén Pinar, all relatively junior *toreros* on the *escalafón* (ranking). Enough bulls had been approved to make up the numbers and there would be no humiliating necessity to bring in bulls from another estate. Somewhere in the bowels of the plaza the bulls rested in individual cells, awaiting their entrance later on in the evening. Abruptly, the bulls had names too. With the publication of the *orden de lidia* - the sheet of paper that details the order in which the bulls and bullfighters will sally – everyone could see the bulls' names alongside their numbers, age, weight and designated bullfighter.

“Cristalero II”, “Plateador”, “Habanero”, “Tronador II”, “Cubanito II”, and “Sortijero”. The names seemed impersonal to me, assigned years ago by Algora when the newborns were registered, not quite fully connected to the bulls we knew so intimately by their numbers. They were familiar as words, but had not had time to become attached to individual animals. For me, the bulls' names brought to mind families of cows (*reatas*), who are named according to themes such as the sky (“Tronador” from *tronar* – to thunder, “Avioneta” from *avión* - aeroplane). The male animals then take a masculine version of a name from their family theme.

It was cloudy as we took our seats, relatively high up in the stands, a little behind and to the right of Algora and his partner. The plaza was only about a third full, if that, so we had

plenty of space. We could see that Algora was tense, so we did not move any closer. Joaquín was visible in the distance, down by the arena in the covert reserved for foremen. He looked pensive, hands on top of the barrier, almost as if he was praying. The grey of the clouds was echoed by the grey of the empty seats. The arena felt deep and concrete compared to the delicate openness of Seville's La Maestranza, which never quite loses its colour, even on rainy days. I remembered explaining to Joaquín the Scottish concept of 'dreich' and the dreary bleakness it conveys, when he had confessed to me that he liked *los dias grises* (grey days) in the countryside, with the damp closeness of the grey bulls moving through wet vegetation beneath low, dull marshland skies.

The trumpets sounded and the bullfighters parade out with their entourages, led by the mounted agents of the plaza officials. They saluted the president. Some of the crowd was closely engaged with the spectacle; boyfriends self-importantly explaining the names and tasks of each person on the stand to their partners (myself included), and tourists gesticulating and taking photos. Another part of the crowd treated the parade in a more routine manner, as part of a the build up to the actual spectacle: something they have seen many times. Perhaps they might have pointed out individual members of the bullfighters' teams, but they did not seem quite as swept up by the pomp and emotion.

The suits of lights of the bullfighters were not brilliant. There was no sun and it was not yet dark enough for spotlights. Neither were they particularly expensive or showy pieces in themselves. These were young bullfighters, or ones who had managed to hash out a career fighting difficult bulls. Nevertheless, there was a sense of hope and anticipation among the fans who had braved the threat of rain:

> “The excitement was great, the aficionados came to the plaza as if they had a date with a girlfriend from their youth who they loved like one loves at 16 years old. They did not have any expectations, but there they went, all carefully styled, debuting the latest shirt, with shoes like mirrors. The memories deserved it and the good times of the past, even more so. The good-looking bulls! And they were coming out/came sallying out (fueron saliendo) one by one. Well-presented, even though the girlfriend was not in every case just how we remembered her.”

(Enrique Martín, Toros Grada 6[32] [Blog])

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José María Lázaro walks out across the sand, immediately raising the stakes and intensifying the level of excitement in the arena by committing to receive his first bull on his knees in front of the exit. Number 31 trots out of the dark to meet Lázaro. He slows to a walk, checking to his left and to his right, still moving forwards. The 32-year old bullfighter lifts his hands one after another, moving the cape in line with the animal's vision, trying to keep his focus. Cristalero II commits in turn, charging and forcing his antagonist to scramble untidily out the way, leaving the bull to finish off the discarded cape on the ground. Lárazo's assistant draws him off and away by provoking with his own cape.

The horses are brought in and Cristalero II does well, knocking over horse and rider the first time and charging without hesitation from a good distance the second, despite a hard, off-target lancing. Thus far he has shown that he is more than just a good-looking animal. Algora perks up a little, deeply invested in what is unfolding below. The bull is well-presented and 'moving': minimum requirements in Madrid. But his promptness to the horse and earlier commitment to the pink and yellow *capote* show something more. If Lázaro can keep it together, building on the solid foundation of the first two stages of the bullfight to help Cristalero II shine in the third, then we might have something here.

> "With the *muleta* (small aid of red cloth), Lázaro was able to *lucirse* (impress), caping the bull (torear) slowly, mainly on the right [hand/horn/side]. It [the bull] was more difficult on the left, with a jumping charge and less obedient. But *encastada* (of or in type), in any case. He went back to the right hand, but he could not reach the stands in the same way [in terms of emotional connection]. With a bit more dedication and desire, Lázaro would have managed to avoid the cooling of the atmosphere he had heated up before. He killed with a full sword thrust, a little too far back, which required *descabellos* (finishing thrusts to the top of the neck). There was applause after one warning for the bullfighter and an ovation for "Cristalero II" as he was dragged out."

(Aleyda Baz, AplausoS.es[33] [Magazine, online and in paper])

32 torosgradaseis.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/una-del-partido-de-resina.html

33 aplausos.es/noticia/25571/noticias/variedad-e-interes-en-la-vuelta-de-los-pablorromeros-a-madrid.html

A positive start. The first bull has fulfilled his obligations, even if the level of his antagonist's commitment was up for debate, and even if he had run out of energy fairly quickly. The second, third, and fourth animals do not stand out in the same way, respectively labelled *"complicado"* (difficult), *"rajado"* (cowardly), and *"incierto"* (uncertain) by Antonio Lorca, taurine critic for El País (Lorca, 2014). The second and fourth are particularly difficult to manoeuvre, clinging to the barrier and *manseando;* that is, displaying tame behaviour – avoiding or not committing to encounters with the horse or cloth. There is a division of opinions when it comes to the third bull, number 21. Had he been cowardly, or had Rubén Pinar just not shown enough *mando* (command or authority) when handling him? I feel a twinge of disappointment: I had always told Joaquín that I liked this bull, not as ostentatiously handsome as his malevolent fieldmate number 19, but constantly present. The kind of potential that takes a bit of effort to notice, and perhaps even more effort to develop and exploit in the ring.

Algora slaps his knee in a sudden display of uncharacteristic frustration when Tronador II stumbles slightly, before quickly composing himself in his seat, never taking his eyes off the bull. For the last decade, and even further back, there has been a nagging weakness in the pabloromero bulls, a lameness that keeps coming back, year after year. This 'disability' is now part of the story of the bull breeding estate, which Algora of course manages. Ultimately, the responsibility for the breeding of these animals comes down to him, and has done so for over twenty years.

One bull, so far: one *Toro*, with a capital 'T'. Just. But two, maybe three, animals who did not come even close to living up to that epithet.

The fifth bull, *el quinto,* number 14, Cubanito II- *cárdeno* in colour, weight 489kg, born 01/09 – enters the arena to applause. There is an immediate connection with the audience. *Chato (*snub-muzzled), his dark head sits lightly on the solidity of his cylindrical body. His horns roll up neatly, echoing the curve of the muscle mounded up behind them. He dashes out of the gates, taking in his new environment on the move, and then immediately responding to the pull of a flashing cape over to his right. His prompt, unquestioning reaction and easy movement build on his physical beauty. He would be slightly built, if it were possible to describe a half-tonne fighting bull in those terms. His

weight does not sit heavily on his frame. The stands lean in. A few rows below me, Algora's tense connection with Cubanito's progress across the sand is palpable.

Promptness *(prontitud),* seriousness *(seriedad),* and a mixture of poise, good-looks and sheer presence *(trapío)* constitute an excellent starting point. The encounter with the horse that follows is prolonged. Francisco Vallejo, the *picador*, and Cubanito lean into one another through the lance, both fully committed. The bull levers so hard that his back legs leave the ground as he pushes the armoured horse and rider back. He does not hesitate to return for a second round and is rewarded with applause. The performance of the *picador* is also acknowledged. The blood flows down the animal's shoulders and front legs, rather than his back, a testament to the accurate placement of the lance.

> "The fifth transmitted [emotion] in his prompt and submissive [head lowered] charges. Better on the right side, as on the left he tended to 'lean in' a little. Mota worked a bit intermittently here, alternating one or another *muletazo* (movement of the *muleta*) with a good line, above all the finishing chest passes, with other passages more disconnected, even though the ensemble was *digno* (respectable/worthy) given the few opportunities he gets [to perform as a low-ranking bullfighter]."
>
> Author unknown, lainformacion.com[34] [News Website]

> "[Pérez Mota] lacking commitment missed the opportunity of a workable bull, a bull with his full four qualifications: beautiful, *bravo*, noble and suitable for triumph."
>
> Paz Domingo Los Toros[35] [Blog]

Watching Cubanito II move with alacrity towards Pérez Mota's insisting *muleta*, his horns rolling up over his lowered head (*arremangado*) it occurs to me that the critics have a difficult job. Reporting emotion - *"el quinto tuvo transmisión"* ("the fifth had transmission/transmitted") - is obviously not the same as witnessing or feeling it. What is

34 lainformacion.com/arte-cultura-y-espectaculos/toros/imponente-y-variada-corrida-de-partido-de-resina-en-las-ventas_GQER5LSajXNp22XVJiK3b5/

35 pazdomingoylostoros.blogspot.co.uk/2014/

more, not everyone would necessarily agree as to what counts as a good, transmitting animal, or indeed a good, transmitting *faena* (performance). The “essence of this performance”, according to Marvin (2015, 41), being “*compenetración* (coming together as one; rapport, mutual understanding or a harmonious relationship) – *how* man and bull move around and with each other.”

From our perspective high up in the stands, the first series of passes Mota and Cubanito weave together lift the arena. The *torero* raises a solid round of applause with an upwards thrust of his hand as he finishes. But by the second and third series the thing falls apart, bit by bit. Parts of the crowd murmur “bien... bien...” with each charge, but another part whistles their disapproval in the hush. The *faena* is excellent, given what has come before, but still halting: each sweep of the *muleta* with any depth isolated, the performance not quite building into something greater than its component parts. I know this is good, but cannot help wanting a little more from both *torero* and *toro*.

When the sword comes it is a little *caida* (fallen or off centre), just enough to dampen any hope for ears (trophies). Cubanito gets his applause, as does Mota. Algora looks happy. The expression *“no hay quinto malo”* (“there are no bad fifth [bulls]”) hangs in the air. Once – or so the story goes – he, as *ganadero*, would have been the one to choose the order in which the bulls would be fought and would traditionally give the best bull the penultimate slot in order to best carry the mood of the evening. Hopefully, the audience would thus leave with a good impression of the whole *corrida*. Nowadays the bulls are allocated by drawing matched pairs from the foreman's hat in the *sorteo*.

The last bull is *Sortijero*, *el diecinueve* (nineteen), the bull which had caused Joaquín and I so much trouble over the summer. Although applauded on entering for his presentation, he is as restless and unpredictable in the arena as he was in the fields. Standing his ground, advancing a little, head held high, and then charging full on from a distance, only to veer sideways at the last minute. By the time it comes to the *muleta* he is impossible, moving only when he wants to and ignoring the pleading, slightly desperate citations of Rubén Pinar. He is a classic example of *un toro reservón;* that is, an excessively reserved bull, one who refuses any possibility of engagement with the trick of the cloth. The last of the good will dissipates and the *corrida* finishes on a weak note.

We find Algora round the back, being congratulated for his bulls by well-wishers as they are washed and turned into carcasses in a bay behind us. He half shrugs as I approach, saying that the bulls moved and that there was spectacle (*"hubo espectáculo"*). The audience could go away happy, even if there were high points and low points. Joaquín, seeing his escape in me, shouts me over. Already out of his *traje* and into jeans and leather jacket, he is ready to go. Only his hat case gives away his status as *mayoral*. We hurry out, stopping only briefly when he is recognised.

An "extraordinary and varied" corrida

From the beginning, when talking about the group of bulls destined for Madrid, Joaquín had told me that this was *una corrida deparejada* (a mismatched bullfight or lot of bulls) in terms of the physical appearance of the animals. They were all good-looking bulls, essentially of the *pabloromero* type, but just did not quite sit neatly or coherently together as a group. The bulls for Corella, in contrast, were all slightly smaller and less well armed, but consistently so. This variety played out in terms of performance as well. As Lorca (2014) put it *"la corrida tuvo interés"* ("the bullfight had interest"), for the "good-looks" of the bulls (*"su bella estampa"*), their "imposing presence" (*"trapío imponente"*), and "varied play" (*"juego variado"*), but also for the challenges it presented and the fact that no bull showed any indications of *"invalidez"* (disability – referring to the weakness that has plagued the *pabloromeros* in recent years).

Algora has always insisted, to me and to whoever will listen, that the issue the Partido de Resina face is not that the bulls have declined or lost some essence of their *encaste* since their heyday, but that the bullfight has changed. For him, it is a question of catching up or modernising, rather than one of *recuperación* (recuperation), which is the way most commentators put it. There had been glimmers of hope in the *corrida,* for both narratives. The first bull and fifth bull had both shown relatively good depth in the *muleta*, fading, but not fading too fast. Certainly not showing the boundless, rhythmic energy of a good Domecq animal or another more "*comercial" or "moderno"* brand of bull. But still, not bad. These bulls, and one or two of the others, had also risen well to the punishment of the lance when they went to the horse, indicating *casta,* or that they were *toros encastados*; hints of *los toros duros de las marismas*, the hard bulls of the marshlands.

The *corrida* produces bulls. Like the cows tested in the *tentaderos*, the character of the bulls – in the sense of temperament, way of going, or way of being – only really becomes visible and assessable in the arena. When Algora talks about *carácter* before the bull or lot of bulls in question embark, it is always putative, that is, uncertain until it is realised in the encounter with the *torero*, the horse, and supporting cast. He and Joaquín might read certain behaviours or specific physiques as good indicators, but taurine character – nobility, *bravura*, attentiveness etc. - is oriented towards and ultimately tested through the series of encounters of the bullfight.

In this narrative, the raw aggression of number nineteen in the fields did not constitute *bravura*, not unless it unfolds with consistency right through the three acts of the *corrida* until he charges onto the sword. He cannot be noble (noble) until he gets the opportunity to charge the trick of the cloth time after time without going for the man or woman behind the cloth. Nor can he be *manso* (tame, like a steer), until he refuses to charge the horse again after being hurt the first time.

When a bull displays tameness or meekness during the bullfight (there's a verb for this: *mansear*), he is considered to be *desencastado*: his behaviour is out of character for his type. In this sense, the subtype of a bull, his lineage and his breeding, become a repository for positive characteristics. Bulls that do not fit this ideal type, or rather do not display the right kind of character, as is the case for many of the bulls of the estate at the moment, do not detract from the image of the *encaste* itself, but they do contribute to the narrative that suggests that the essence of the subtype of bulls – the *pablorromeros* – has been lost and with that some essence of the *ganadería*, the estate itself.

Joaquín did not dwell on the *corrida* once we were home, although he kept abreast of the reactions on social media and made sure to thank those that congratulated him. When I pressed him on what he thought of the *corrida,* he just indicated there was more work to do: *“estoy contento pero no satisfecho”* (“I'm happy but not satisfied.”). Much later, when I asked him about the relationship between his promise to the Virgin and the *corrida*, he corrected my assumption that the outcome of the event had anything to do with Her. For him, it had been about getting there.

Chapter VI - Veterinary Futures: Hope and loss in the taurine countryside

"...Cuando se pierde un encaste
se pierde aquella leyenda,
se comete una barbarie
contra la naturaleza.
Peligra la ecologia
y agoniza la dehesa.
Y quién querrá mas a un toro
que el que tiene la grandeza
de aguantarlos en el campo
a que cumplan cuatro hierbas..."

"When a type of bull is lost
a legend disappears
a barbarity is committed
against nature.
The environment in danger
and the wooded pasture near death.
And who loves a bull more
than he who has the greatness
to support them in the fields
until they have lived four springs..."

"I'm pro-bullfighting, gentlemen" ("Soy taurino señores")
by José Leon, translated by author.

Abulaga field, Partido de Resina Estate, January

Bringing in the Abulaga lot is always difficult, or as Joaquín puts it, *"complicado"*. Theirs is not the most extensive calving field, but the slight slope combined with patchy woodland makes things tricky. On the herding trajectory that best leads to the gate in the Northeast corner, there is a shallow ditch, and potholes to contend with, as well as dense patches of gorse - *abulaga* – after which the field and its contents are named. Further complicating things, hay bales have been situated on this route in the recent past, leaving a compacted, slippery layer on top of the ground. It is not ideal terrain for moving safely at speed on horseback, or for manoeuvring a herd of mature fighting cows and their calves through the exit and towards the estate buildings as one body.

We seal off the crossroads where the four calving fields meet, leaving open just the Abulaga gate and the track that leads to the corrals. I work on the entrance to Ojo, the field bordering our target herd's enclosure on the East side. Joaquín tackles the more important Eucalipto gate. We know from past experience that if the latter is not visibly blocked, the lead Abulaga cows will run straight through into the Eucalipto field, resulting in the chaos of two herds mixing together. Some of the younger cows have only recently been allocated to the different calving enclosures, which means that, given the opportunity, they might reform their cohort grouping. Add young mothers with tenuous bonds to their first calves to the mess and the potential for pandemonium only increases. I hang on to Zahara as I fiddle with barbed wire and baler twine, while Joaquín lets the less jumpy Cabezón go so he can use both hands. Zahara still tends to start when I go to pick up the bits of fencing that can be pulled across gateways to close them off. I have to be careful if conditions are muddy and I need to tug hard to straighten out the tangled wire and plastic tubing, as is the case this particular grey morning. Closing such gates from horseback is something I still have not mastered. Properly-set swing gates, perhaps with catches at rider height, might have been more effective, but Joaquín can knock up a wire gate or two in an evening's work without having to go through the owner's office or justify any extra costs. What is more, a solid gate is no more likely than a gate made of wire to withstand an encounter with a bull.

The steers watch as we tie off our knots, morose in the January chill. My task is to wait with them while Joaquín and Joselito push the stock towards us so we can sandwich the

herd in-between as we guide them into the holding fields at the corral entrance. In moments like this, I sometimes wish Quito, Borracho, Negri, and La Profesora would look at me as if I were their *cabestrero* – the person in charge of their training from a young age – but, of course, they are as untrained as I am, *cabestros* (steers) only in name. Yes, they know the tracks and alleyways of the estate, having run them all their lives, but our working relationship is, for the most part, based on an uneasy mix of familiarity and nervous respect for one another, with a hefty dose of shouting and threatening on my part. Only Quito is approachable, even amenable to the odd scratch or to posing with children, but he is handled with food and prods more than with the ropes and commands of what Nogales refers to as the traditional *doma* or training for steers. Sometimes they surprise me, responding with alacrity to Joaquín's calls of their names and “hop, hop, hop” in the corrals. But just as often they are disappointing, inciting his anger; pale shadows of their entire brothers, lumbering cowards tasked with leading their ferociously alert fighting sisters. Every so often, we talk about training them up, but we never find time so we work with them as they are.

This time, it takes us just two attempts to get the Abulaga herd out to the main holding field, El Charcón. Our first effort actually almost works: the gentle, creeping push from Joaquín, Joselito and the dogs only going to pieces when the younger cows at the back – newly part of the breeding herd having passed the selection tests last year – panic, bunch, and run the length of the main bulk of animals as a separate unit. Predictably, they then ignore the steers, who by this point have been trotting along behind me over the crossroads, showing the way. The youngsters veer off, desperately squeezing through the space between Joaquín and the fence on the North side of the field, and then disappearing off into the brush. Joselito is sent after them, his horse slipping as they accelerate away over the damp ground.

I can see Joaquín's frustration building. He cannot even stop for a cigarette because the vets are waiting for us back in the corrals. There are calves running about all over the place, their mothers calling out for them and searching left and right, disrupting any sense of overall herd direction and, with that, our ability to manipulate this direction. The juvenile selectee cows pick fights with the dogs, chasing them round and round. The sight of gangs of delicate, deer-like heifers harassing the scraggly, pathetic Mono, while in turn being harassed by the sleeker, more professional Mona, is almost comical, but in the moment

there is no amusement. Not mid-manoeuvre in any case. Joaquín's anxiety shapes the mood, and our determination not to be the one to mess things up keeps us serious.

Having brought the steers back along the track, hounded by Joaquín's cries of *"más ligero, más ligero!"* ("faster, faster!"), we form up again, switching tactics. This time we opt to hold the steers further up the fenceline, meaning that I can then peel off and double back to join the push from behind, reducing the gaps between riders so as to put more consistent pressure on the now riled-up herd. That is how I interpret Joaquín's angry commands, at least.

However, without a rider to slow their progress, the steers slouch on ahead thoughtlessly, leaving us stuck in the gateway with the mass of cows. We have them contained, pinned against the gap in the fence through which they are supposed to go. Each of the riders makes constant micro-adjustments, heading off single cows before they can even contemplate making a break for it. One animal taking a few steps in the wrong direction could rapidly transform into a stampede of escapees.

Fortunately, an older cow chooses to move cautiously into the crossroads, followed in dribs and drabs by the others as we inch forward. We are unable to push hard because the herd is not showing any interest in the open avenue to El Charcón, meaning that there are cows and calves on different sides of barbed wire fences, hanging around next to the closed gateways to the other fields. An overenthusiastic *arreón* from one of us (a sudden push forwards at a canter or gallop – one of the foundation movements of Doma Vaquera horsemanship), could result in animals injuring themselves trying to go through fences or gates. This risk is even greater when calves and youngstock are present.

Handling large groups of cows ranging in age from three to fifteen plus is generally very different to handling fraternal bands of mature bulls. With the smaller, tightly bonded groups of bulls we know who the troublemakers are or which animals can be relied on to hold things together. Of course, the size and aggression of the adult bulls adds an element of danger to the proceedings, but it also makes them relatively more predictable and manageable ('relatively' being the operative word here). Stock of different ages move in distinct ways, as do stock with calves at foot, so mixed groups create additional challenges. In the case of the Abulaga lot, the risks – to the cattle, and to ourselves and

our horses – are exacerbated as none of us have been around long enough to know the more mature cows well. Even Joaquín has just a few years of experience in actually moving these individuals as foreman. Nogales might have worked for much longer with these cows, assisting both Joaquín and the former *mayoral*, but his role has been sporadic and he is not helping on this particular day.

This sense of risk and extra challenge is clear as we watch the Abulaga cows mill around in the crossroads. All it would take to cause disaster is an individual or a group of animals moving suddenly in the wrong direction: perhaps pressure from behind pushing frontrunners into or through a closed gateway, or a calf slipping through the fence, dragging first their mother and then the rest of the herd with them. We have to be prepared to give way if the herd doubles back on itself, but, equally, we are under pressure to stand our ground and get the animals to the waiting vets as quickly as possible. We have a lot of stock to get through today, and indeed this week. On Friday we will be back in the same situations, moving the same group of cows, while Thursday will be dominated by yesterday's lots.

Joaquín decides to slip quietly into the crossroads, skirting around the edge to the right in order to try and scoop the herd out of a space we have created by sealing off all but two of the six exits. The steers are long gone, taking with them their pull factor and leaving us with only the ability to push. We give him space and then move in too, taking up positions toward the left and centre respectively, acutely aware that if we misjudge this we could end up pinned up against a fence with no exit, surrounded by cows that could turn on us at any moment. I have to constantly remind myself that the undifferentiated mass of bodies that make up the herd could, in the course of a moment, resolve itself into the fixed rage and magnetic connection of a charging individual. In such situations, we cannot call out to one another. The balance of risk is too delicate. It is a case of trying to work out what Joaquín wants, or how far we can push our own initiative.

I can never tell whether the rivalry I feel between Joselito and myself in these moments is real or if it is a case of ethnographer's anxiety. If it is real, it is unspoken, revealing itself in frowns and jockeying at times like these: when performance comes to the fore. The undivided attention of an angry cow can be as much an opportunity as a disaster. Only in such instances can we really shine, with an adroit side-step or a perfectly timed *arreón* to

push a wavering animal back into the herd: little moments of *toreo*, where we juggle valour and skill. The miscreant thought skips away, ushered out as I am forced to concentrate on tracking the ebb and flow of movement in the crossroads, tapping Zahara over lightly with spur so as to keep her aligned with our exit.

When the first cows file into the exit track, the relief is immediate. Once the rest follow, hands drop, legs relax, and the horses seem to breathe out with us. The way forward is straightforward, a railroad along which we can gently urge the herd. Mona and Mono do most of the work, yapping at the heels of stragglers, though we keep close, knowing that the heavy gate to El Charcón has come partially off its hinges and will need lifting from the ground. We do not want to be caught out of the saddle should the herd turn back after entering the field. In the top corner of the enclosure, off to our right, I can see Quito and the other steers hiding among broken hayracks, as if hoping that we will forget about them up there and forgive their earlier abandonment of us.

From this point, the whole process is more streamlined: a series of gates and ever shrinking enclosures that lead to the corrals. I am sent to recruit the reluctant steers once more and we make swift progress. In fact, our momentum is such that the herd leaves behind a couple of calves, too small still to cope with the speed and chaos. Joaquín pushes on, leaving Joselito and I to gather up the fallen ones. With the cows gone, El Charcón suddenly seems huge and empty, the bewilderment of the deserted *becerritos* expanding out around them. Their mothers will be swept up in the rush of the other cows as they flood into and up the main corral alleyway. We hear the distant shout of “Puerta!” and a corresponding clang. The last gate is high and heavy, shut with finality by invisible hands. Its closure removes the immediate burden of risk from us; the calves left behind have neither the presence of a herd nor that of a mature fighting animal. Their bravery peters out for lack of physicality, one moment challenging us, the next running off.

Zahara protests vigorously when I lift one of the vociferous little creatures over her shoulders, its hooves digging into her neck as I arrange it so as to be able to hold it still with one arm. I can see that Joselito is itching to take it off me, to help me or perhaps to assert himself, ever the rival *vaquero*, but I insist and both the calf and Zahara calm down as we cut through to the corral complex to join the others.

Saneamiento

We leave the horses off to the side, depositing the calves, along with a few others who have fallen behind in the alleyway, into a holding pen, where they will soon be joined by their mothers. Without a word, Joselito goes up onto the walkways to start processing the cows in the corrals for the veterinary screening, cutting them up into manageable units and separating off the remaining calves. He passes a patch of freshly plastered wall; it had been falling down where bees had lodged themselves in cracks in the part of the corral that abutted Joaquín's little flat. The vets are set up below; papers, vaccination guns, and ear-tags laid out neatly on a table beside the treatment chute. Maríalu, as I later come to know her, dressed in jeans and a dark green college of veterinarians' hoodie, is going over lists of numbers – each one representing an animal – with Algora, who wears his usual smart shirt and trousers. He rarely wears anything else, although seeing him with other vets makes his role as bull-breeder and representative of the estate seem less clear-cut. I cannot quite imagine him as a veterinary student, wearing a hoodie, but here he is less the scholarly bull breeder and more the practitioner of veterinary medicine, comfortable with the tools and talk of the trade. Nearby, Maríalu's colleague and partner changes the blades on a set of electronic clippers before clipping the battery pack to his belt and joining his veterinary companions. His style is more *'campero'* (of the countryside/country), comprising a flat cap, check shirt and fleece gilet; echoing what Joselito and Nogales are wearing, and perhaps also their *afición* or passion for the countryside.

Glancing up at me as I walk up, Maríalu half-asks, half-comments "¿Ese niño sigue aquí?" ("That boy is still here?"), addressing her fellow vets with a smile. My first contact with these two was in the year before, when they came to the estate for a combined tuberculosis, brucellosis, leukosis, and pleuropneumonia screening. I had mostly stayed above with the other helpers, trying to learn how to handle stock in the corrals but mainly getting told off by Nogales for shutting doors too soon or too late, not even quite sure what was happening in all the confusion of my first month of fieldwork. I had been more focused on getting to know each group of cows and had wanted to avoid bothering the busy-looking vets, my notes consisting of long lists of physical features and comments on behaviour, with only brief reference to the purpose of the day: *el saneamiento* (the screening of livestock for disease). Nogales initially referred to the visiting vets as

“veterinarios de la OCA” (Oficina Comarcal Agraria: local agricultural office), before explaining to me in a matter of fact manner that this meant that they worked for the state.

During the period of my fieldwork (2013-2016), the autonomous regional administration of Andalusia, in accordance with the national plan for the eradication of bovine tuberculosis, mandates twice yearly tuberculosis screening in areas with a herd prevalence of above three percent. The Partido de Resina animals, as bovine livestock, fall under the remit of the Sanlucar la Mayor office (designated the Poniente de Sevilla area), which, in 2014, had an overall herd prevalence rate of 12.08%, and so continues to be subject to the biannual *saneamientos*. Maríalu and her colleague, as two of the 250 vets qualified to carry out these checks in Andalusia, are thus present on the estate as frontline representatives of a much larger drive to tackle tuberculosis in Spain, and, ultimately, in Europe, as the European Union has co-funded the program since the early nineties.

Clippers and vaccination guns prepped, the vets nod to Joaquín, who shouts *“Vaca!”*

(“Cow!”) and pulls down on the lever which opens the partition between the screening crush and the last of the series of small pens which allow us to separate herds into small groups or individuals. A number is called out from above and a cow rushes through into the light, horns clattering on sheets and bars of metal, before reaching a dead end beside Joaquín, who quickly pins her against the sides of the crush with a wide grill. He holds onto a rope which is looped through the grill and the bars of the chute several times, allowing him to maintain flexible pressure on the animal without locking her down completely. Once she is still, the clippers move in, finding a spot between the upper shoulder and neck, and baring a small patch of skin for the waiting needle. The shoulder bucks abruptly under the pressure of the restraints, causing the vets to lean back, making sure their heads were well out of the way of the horns, but the job is done. A quick scribble next to her number on the vets' list and Joaquín is already loosening the grill, while yelling for me to open the gate to the receiving pen and get out of the way. He swings open the side of the crush before leaping out of the way himself as the cow tumbles out with a characteristic sharp, snorting expiration of breath and lunging movement upwards, clearing the alleyway of now invisible enemies. We are all hidden, crouched behind barriers or above, poised to process the next animal once she makes her exit.

Each cow is like the one before, yet with innumerable small differences: the ones who refuse to enter the screening tube, or move forward as the divides are raised, ignoring prods and shouts from above and the side, only to leap forwards when the male OCA vet waves his flat cap in her line of sight, momentarily a *torero* citing her with a cloth aid. The smaller cows, who squeeze in two at a time, sometimes hide their heads underneath their companions, making reading their ear-tags difficult, or covering themselves with excrement. There are some whose numbers cannot be seen from above or who have lost their ear-tags, meaning that Joaquín, Algora and the vets have to consult their lists to try and work out which cow is in front of them. A couple of times, Joaquín reaches through the fat bars of the grill to feel the branding scars hidden beneath black hair, numbers etched in low ridges of proud flesh. He is careful, wary of sudden movement from the animal under his hand. The first time he looks at me with a glint in his eye as if to say “I bet you would not have thought of that.” His human hand on a fighting cow's back strikes me as too intimate; it jars with the mechanical connections of prod, crush, clippers, and needle, bringing home the reach of the screening program with its ability to pull living, breathing – fighting – matter out of place.

Half-way through, I notice that Algora, on the other side of the chute, is taking blood from under the tail of each animal. I have been focusing on the front-end while toing and froing to the gate to the receiving pen. Through the gaps in the metal structure I can see that he has set up a table around the corner next to the stocks. Rows of little phials sit in a partitioned box next to his list of the cows coming through. Not wanting to make Joaquín think I am bothering his boss, I make a mental note to ask him about it later, in private. We had taken blood at a previous *saneamiento.* I remember it well as I had been in charge of numbering the phials. We had extracted two samples from the young male animals, and just one from the cows, so I am curious as to why we need to take blood again, during a *saneamiento* which is purportedly just about tuberculosis.

On the face of things, the overall process for checking cattle for tuberculosis (TB) is straightforward. The Tuberculin Skin Test is standard, legally required practice in the European Union. The patch of clipped skin is injected with a TB protein (tuberculin) and then 72 hours later the patch is checked for inflammation, which is an indicator of a possible infection of tuberculosis bacteria. When it comes to fighting stock, all animals older than six months, except males of more than 24 months who are not destined for breeding, are subject to these checks. This is the basic level of screening, which, according to the national plan, escalates quickly into an 'epidemiological investigation' if there is a positive or suspect test result. Depending on the number of potential cases, and whether the test results are suspect or positive, the TB status of the estate will be changed and the animals in question will either have to be isolated on site or sent to the slaughterhouse. In such cases, there will be further testing and imposition of biosecurity measures, as well as an investigation into possible sources of the infection.

Similarly, the actual processing of the cows is relatively straightforward. Between the team and the efficiency of the corral infrastructure, we can easily manage the stock. As we continue to inject the Abulaga lot with tuberculin, the cry of *"Vaca!"* becomes "Cow!" in my honour. In the brief pauses between animals, or when the people above need some extra time to sort cows from calves, Maríalu speaks of friends in Edinburgh and a mobile, international life that seems very far away from the ribald banter of the *pueblo* lads above. Then, almost in the same breath, she talks of pilgrimage and El Rocío, as well as her own horses. She asks more generally if we are going to *las candelerías* (the big winter event in

El Rocío). And if we have seen the videos of the flooded pilgrimage road, with 4x4s stuck in muddy sand? She went with Triana, the brotherhood from the district of the same name opposite the old town in Seville itself. “Triana” is said with pride, but perhaps also with a little bashfulness. The area connotes flamenco tradition and authenticity, now coloured by tourism. I recall seeing a t-shirt with the slogan “Not everyone is from Triana”, reflecting a slightly threatened sense of exclusivity. It was a big, inner city *hermandad*, attracting all kinds of people. The conversation is light, the pilgrimage theme finding common ground between the vets, Algora, Joaquín, and myself. Nobody loses sight of the task at hand, though. The cows will not allow it, their rage and fear always only just contained by the chutes and stocks of the screening system and Joaquín's manipulation of rope and lever; their stress is evident to all.

In the background, somewhere behind the official paperwork with its verification barcode, or behind Algora's studied joviality, hangs the threat of *el sacrificio obligatorio*, the mandatory slaughter of animals that test positive. Although additional checks or biosecurity measures would be a nuisance, the threat of forced slaughter looms particularly large given the genetic uniqueness of the Partido de Resina (Pablo Romero) animals, and their comparatively low numbers. Even just a few cows removed from the pool of breeding stock could potentially ruin Algora's efforts to improve the estate bloodlines. The word *“irrecuperable”* (irrecoverable) has a specific, layered meaning when it comes to sub-types of bulls such as *los pablоromeros*. With only around 120 mothers out in the calving fields, each *reata* (family group) is represented by just a handful of individuals. A good line of cows and the positive future they might represent for the estate could, conceivably, be truncated in one devastating day of screening. Compensation from the state would not mean a lot because the loss of animals would threaten the project of recuperation which Algora – and the Morales family – took on when they took over the failing Pablo Romero estate, which itself is the product of over a century of focused breeding efforts. Each year, alongside the passing of famous bullfighters, bull breeders, and foremen, the passing of whole estates – lines of fighting animals – is mourned, my friends on facebook alternatively posting tributes and despairing rants. Partido de Resina teeters on the edge, and the *saneamiento* makes its precarity as an endeavour even more apparent.

Replaceability/exception/mastery/modernity

A few days before the January 2015 TB screening, I had encountered Algora by chance on one of my regular visits to Francisco 'Pajito' Diaz's yard in Villamanrique, where I took my lessons in Doma Vaquera. He was operating on a horse's tail. After the job was done and the horse was all bandaged up, Pajito, having worked on the Partido de Resina estate during the days of the Pablo Romero family, asked Algora how things were going there. They talked about winter jobs; the harrowing of fields and identification of new calves. Pajito was polite and did not press, but I could see that every detail meant a lot to him as they worked out which fields they were each talking about (they used different names). Then Algora mentioned the upcoming *saneamiento*. Online, I had read about the potential negative implications when it came to screening fighting stock for tuberculosis, but this was the first time I had heard Algora voice his own concerns so frankly. His online presence was more curated. This was very much Algora the *ganadero* speaking, despite the fact that he was standing next to a bucket of veterinary tools, having a post-operation smoke with a client. He was relating things he had talked about with other bull-breeders, in particular the idea that bringing in "the whole estate" *("la ganadería entera")* was not only a major hassle which exposed his stock and staff to unnecessary risk in the fields and corrals, but also that the concomitant stress might also affect the year's calving. There were rumours of *ganaderos* suffering particularly low successful calving rates as a result of increased screening requirements.

Pajito nodded along. The state is very present when it comes to managing animals and agriculture in Spain, as it is in many other areas. That presence was not necessarily invasive though. I am sometimes surprised by the routineness of transactions involving the agricultural authorities. Nogales, Pajito, and Algora might all own and handle animals in very different ways, and come from different educational backgrounds, but they all seem on the same page – literally – when it comes to dealing with state bureaucracy. I am the one who finds their familiarity with administrative procedures strange. Pajito, for example, buys and sells horses all the time, so paperwork, as well as the necessary trips to local government and veterinary offices, are a constant feature in his life. His brother Antonio was also foreman on the late Duchess of Alba's nearby estate and handled a herd of beef cattle, which we always referred to as *ganado manso* (tame livestock/cattle), so Pajito has regularly been involved with moving stock for veterinary purposes. This notwithstanding,

there is a sense in which these interactions, which involved the same state bodies and, in the case of the cattle, the same vets, are seen differently to the screenings at Partido de Resina and other bull breeding estates, as they do not involve fighting stock. Even if the style of horsemanship – doma vaquera – further connected the two distinct kinds of bovid, there was something exceptional about fighting animals.

Helping Antonio with the *faenas* (jobs such as rounding up livestock, and screening them) provides an opportunity for Pajito to give the young horses he is working with some experience with livestock, while also indulging and sharing his own passion for doma vaquera horsemanship and work with the *garrocha* (lance) in a low risk environment. Tame cattle, even with calves at foot, are unlikely to charge, and even less likely to actually reach the horse if they do behave threateningly. The atmosphere on the occasions when I am able to join Pajito and Antonio is different to what I have become accustomed to at Partido de Resina. This is the kind of fieldwork I had fantasised about before arriving in Andalusia: cantering through oak woodlands on immaculately schooled horses, in the company of people considered to be masters of doma vaquera or better yet, practitioners of *“doma vaquera de verdad”* (true doma vaquera). Pajito is regularly featured on a facebook page of the same name, which puts an emphasis on functional horsemanship in competitions. This 'real livestock horsemanship' is opposed to a perceived increase in unnecessarily embellished movements in the arena, and fancy pairings of horses and riders, who, as Pajito put it, “would not last two *arreones* in the countryside”. The page has over 18000 likes at the time of writing. Pajito as triple National Doma Vaquera Champion, is, of course, famous beyond this community, frequently appearing in televised interviews and magazine articles.

The key difference is that these trips with Pajito are exercises in accomplished *arte* (skill), the opposite of the seat-of-trews Partido de Resina experience. If, as I suggest above, moments of horseback confrontation with fighting cows are rare opportunities to become part of a wider, skilled countryside aesthetic – fleeting instances in the otherwise ruthlessly basic push and pull kind of herdmanship at Partido de Resina – then helping the Pajitos herd the Duchess' cattle constitutes a few hours of immersion in that *'vaquera'* aesthetic. Every movement is correct, control is absolute. We warm up properly before interacting with the stock. We knot our horses' tails and carried our lances appropriately at each pace; on our thighs at walk and in the crook of our arms at canter.

Pajito himself often describes to me what it was like to work with the Pablo Romero bulls before the installation of the concrete corrals and crushes, when stock were handled in rudimentary enclosures or *a campo abierto* (in the open countryside). Even the arena had just been a circle of stubby Eucalyptus posts. The tame cattle were kept in a similarly unstructured space, with relatively few fence-lines and a just basic timber fold through which to process and screen the stock. This meant that rounding up the animals necessitated a good number of riders to pen them in without the aid of fences for large parts of the process, as had been the case on the Partido de Resina estate in the past, when it extended far into the marshlands. It was the skill (and brute force) of the *vaqueros* which held things together.

Working with Pajito, his brother, son, and friends, makes me appreciate the double layer of risk that exists when it comes to *el saneamiento* at Partido de Resina. When I talk to him about Zahara, he makes it very clear that she is inadequate for the job, certainly in the hands of an amateur like myself. If she cannot – if we cannot – achieve a correct *parón a raya* (sliding stop) and *media vuelta* (180 degree spin), what on earth are we supposed to do when a bull, or cow, turns on us? Equally, he expresses amazement that Joaquín puts so much faith in the elderly Cabezón. What is he going to do when the experienced horse dies and he has to take on a younger horse who does not know fighting stock? Why do we take photos while carrying the *garrocha* when we very rarely use it properly? “It's like carrying a bow, but not knowing how to shoot with it.” The lance makes a satisfying thunk as he slides it forwards through his hands then grips it firming in the strike position, his eyes locked on the backside of an imaginary bull a few feet in front of the point.

It is this sense of control that is missing at the crossroads where the Abulaga, Eucalipto, Ojo and Silos fields meet. The sense of precarity and ever-present risk fades a bit among the red fittings of the corrals and stocks, but it never quite goes away.

The remaining calves are the last to come through. Too young to be screened or even vaccinated, and too small to necessitate cautious handling, they are allowed to bypass the inspection chute and run straight out to join the rest of the Abulaga lot. *Becerros* are not easy to herd, particularly when they are only days or weeks old, so we have to wade in among them, revelling in the unusually close contact with fighting stock at liberty to move.

They squirm away from our touch, only to come back at us hard. A female, butting at my shins as hard as she can, is left behind by her companions. She is brown with white trimmings, which means that she will probably end up the typical grey-roan colour of the house. Though small, she feels reassuringly solid as I half lift her by her chest and turn her round to face the open pen door. She moves out, tentatively at first, passing the stocks where her old brothers have their horns sheathed and unsheathed, or where their injuries are treated. As she runs out through the enclosure where she will be branded in front of a watching crowd of local people in less than a year's time, I notice that the cracks in the wall which Joaquín has tried to plaster over are open again. A bee emerges and flies off.

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The return journey is always easier, so Joselito and Joaquín go on their own. The state vets head off to their car for a quick snack. This leaves me with Algora who is cutting wild olive shrubs down and tossing them over the fence into the receiving pen (where the stock are held after screening). I am slightly perturbed to see him doing something so rustic. Of course, as a vet, he regularly gets his hands, or rather his gloves, dirty, but this is not the same. I am also accustomed to seeing him opening and shutting gates or prodding animals along in the corrals, but these activities are always done from above, with a certain amount of distance. Once, when Joaquín had been away we had gone out together to move some stock. Seeing him with his leather half chaps on had surprised me. He was comfortable on horseback too, though his horse had seemed a bit unsure about this new, slightly heavier rider. There is a lot I do not know about this man, despite his near constant presence and all the taurine knowledge he so willingly shares. Is he, quietly, also *un aficionado a los caballos:* a fan of horses/horseman? I do not recall seeing any photos of him posing with the *garrocha* on his office walls, which are adorned with photos of select Pablo Romero bulls. This notwithstanding, Algora gives off an air of stress relieved as he works. The removal of the shrubs brings order to the corral, as well as giving the animals on the other side of the fence something to pick at in an otherwise bare and muddy enclosure.

Without waiting for me to ask, Algora explains that the young olive leaves make good supplementary forage for cattle. This is something they used to do on a regular basis in late winter/early spring. I understand 'they' to be the former *mayoral* and those that worked

with him, before Joaquín took up the role. Although, Algora may well just mean that this is something that used to happen more generally, before regular hard feed (cereals) became the norm for fighting stock.

I take the opportunity to ask him again about the blood samples he has been taking. If we were only screening for tuberculosis, not brucellosis, and the cows were mature animals, their moment in the arena – their testing or *tienta* – long since past, then why take blood? He replies enthusiastically, saying that he wants to catalogue the DNA of each animal, especially the cows, so he can improve his selection process and endeavour to keep the bloodlines open, given the limited material he has to work with on the estate. I have spent barely 15 months on the estate, but I have already been given the impression that Algora, and parts of the wider world of the bulls are working ceaselessly to sharpen the tools of bull breeding. However, his words, coming as they do against the backdrop of crumbling infrastructure and immense stress, bring to mind the barriers that his enthusiasm faces, rather than a vision of the positive future he is describing. I know that back in his office there are reams of paper notes and many gigabytes of photos and film footage that need to be compiled and uploaded to his breeding management program, stretching back years. He will need a full-time assistant to realise his dreams of improvement; sending away DNA samples is the easy part. However, just as Joselito is unlikely to ever be employed full-time as a *vaquero* to support Joaquín, it is unlikely that Algora will receive further help in fulfilling his role as bull-breeder.

I imagine the Abulaga lot settling as Joaquín and Joselito ride away, shutting the gate behind them. The steers, our horsemanship, the fences and gates – all the tools we have used to bring the cows and their offspring into the corrals – might, in theory, also be improved in order to grip more firmly onto that sense of control, evoked fleetingly in the pretty photos we upload to Twitter and Facebook, posed with our lances. But on days like this, it feels like we are barely clinging on; improvement would be too much to ask. The juxtaposition of the tuberculosis screening with Algora's DNA sampling is uncomfortable in the abstract, even if in terms of actual process it was smoothed by convivial talk among the veterinarians. One set of results might end Partido de Resina conclusively, the other might map out its future.

Chapter VII – The turning out of the stud bulls: Life, death, and taurine ecology

"...El toro tiene un destino
que se llama sol y arena.
No es carne de matadero
de una puntilla certera,
de manos de un matarife
como si fuera ternera.
Se enfrenta al oro y la plata
hasta el fin de la pelea..."

"...The bull has a destiny
which is called sun and arena.
It is not meat from the abattoir
with a well-aimed last blow
from the hands of a slaughterman
as if it were beef.
It faces the gold and silver[36]
until the end of the fight..."

"I'm pro-bullfighting, gentlemen" ("Soy taurino señores")
by José León, translated by author.

36

Gold and silver here refer to the suits of lights worn by the *torero* and their team respectively.

Main track, Partido de Resina estate, December

The skip where we put the bodies of dead animals is positioned very centrally. We ride or drive past it almost every day, its contents just that bit more visible from horseback. It sits right on the main track out to the fields, against the wall of the barn where hay is stored and opposite the enclosure where the working horses are kept; unavoidable and obvious, it lurks there throughout the year. In the spring, greenery pushes up close round it, but by the summer the plants have shrivelled and shrunk back, as if burnt by the hot streaks of rust on the container's sides. I worry that tourists, rattling past in a liveried trailer pulled by the load-all, would be treated to ugly glimpses of a bloated corpse. The sight of four hooves in the air, poking up above the rim of the skip, is uncomfortable. And no matter how much Joaquín or one of his local companions might argue to me that this kind of death is part of the reality of countryside life – perhaps in defiant response to what they see as my urban and academic pretensions – the bodies are always tidied away by the time the visiting clubs of *aficionados* arrive; shipped off, paperwork duly signed and ear-tags handed over. When it comes down to it, some elements of the countryside are more presentable than others.

Despite the removal of the carcass, the smell always lingers on, more offensive than the dilapidated fencing that encloses the horses or the piles of decaying hayfeeders just around the corner. It is not something we can smooth over easily. For major tourism days, we pick up fallen branches in the main courtyard, put flowers on the walls, and even borrow a mower to tackle the grass in front of the big house. Once, Joaquín has strimmed the estate brand onto the lawn in a fit of creativity, immediately uploading a photo to Instagram. But our efforts are pathetic given the scale of wear on the estate and its facilities. As Joaquín puts it, the paid labour needed to maintain the estate could “feed a family”: there is enough work for one or even two full time employees just painting, mowing, and repairing, never mind doing the core jobs involving the bulls. When asked, he will immediately link the current situation to *“la crisis”* generally. When he says this, I am reminded of how, every other day, when I exercised Nogales' naughty horse Capricho, I pass a *finca* called “Cerrado” (literally “closed”), where a witty someone had scrawled “*por las crisis*” underneath the sign at the gate, making it “Closed by the crisis”.

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Joaquín often described his first ten years on the estate as just “fixing fences”, as if all the tasks he had been involved in – feeding, working with the stock in the corrals, all the *faenas* I have outlined in this thesis - came down to the hours doing the base level upkeep that allowed the estate infrastructure to function. We could spend a day tidying up the front of the house, but the real work, the work that kept the animals alive and well - fed, watered and enclosed - was never complete. And without more employees, Joaquín would never even be able to get ahead on it. Most days he would get the basics done, only to have to go and repair something urgent, or see a visitor: fire-fighting rather than working towards improving the estate or its systems, which was something he aspired to doing. The physical structures of the estate demand attention, it has to be at a certain standard for visitors. But the “irrevocable ethical force” (Faubion 2011, 145) here is exerted by the bulls – as individuals needing veterinary attention, as fields of cows and calves needing water, as *corridas* needing exercise, and as entire *encastes* or *ganaderías* needing recuperating or modernising. This work comes first, although the work that can be done to improve an *encaste* is diffuse, distributed across individual acts of care and made visible in individual performances in the arena. Here, as is the case in many animal husbandry contexts “care for the multiple implies care for its constituent elements” (Wanner 2016, 38; see also Harbers 1010).

The bodies have to be tidied up quickly, though, whatever the cause of death (age mostly). Not only do they have to be disposed of according to the regulations – within a specific timeframe, and with good reason, given the risk of disease – but it would be an ugly thing to leave them out in the fields; a sign of genuine neglect, rather than a lack of money or personnel. There had been mutterings in town when the cows had got a bit thin because of poor grazing during my first year of fieldwork. “It's not right.” But such mutterings would have been much worse if it were known that carcasses were being left where they fell. Joaquín discouraged us from talking too much about what was going on at the estate, and initially tried to curate my photos (until I 'got' what was acceptable and what was not), but when the estate was opened up for events for visiting groups, or even to trusted local hunters, there was no controlling what might be seen or said. The bulls are protectors of the *dehesa* and the marshlands as a natural space only in life. Here, unlike when it comes to bovine emplacement in other European landscapes where an ecological narrative is present, e.g. in the case of rewilding in Holland (Lorimer & Driessen 2016, 639-640), the

death and decomposition of large mammals are not (yet) seen as integral parts and processes of the taurine landscape. Carcasses are swept up, as mandated by the EU, but also because the taurine countryside is a dynamic, shifting performance of a certain kind of countryside: one ruled by the bull, *el rey del campo bravo* (the king of the taurine countryside).

In any case, there are not many tourists visiting in December. The mornings are very cold, the dampness of the marshland air pressing through doubled up sweaters. These are grey days, Joaquín's favourite kind, as, with characteristic mischief, he never failed to inform me; always the contrarian. As I mentioned previously, he likes the Scottish word 'dreich', with its connotations of wall-to-wall greyness, somewhere between mist and drizzle. On days like this, his disposition often tends to sour when the sun pushes the grey aside, and his customary headaches return. His silences lengthen as breakfast time approaches at ten or eleven o'clock, his plan for the day already messed up by a series of unforeseen problems which need his attention.

I like to imagine that there is an easy connection between his love of grey days and his role as caretaker of grey bulls, but as soon as I put this thought to Joaquín its silliness becomes apparent, and is crushed by his foreman's scowl. The anthropologist in me is caught, flat-footedly seeking patterns with which to write. He is on camera though, as I am wearing a GoPro, so he has no choice but to respond, hesitating initially, but then warming to his theme, steering my comment onto familiar ground: grey bulls – *toros grises* – means difficult bulls, minority types – Saltillos, Miuras, Victorinos, Adolfos, and others, as well as his own Pabloromeros, with their own particularly stubborn kind of difficultness. *“Encastes complicados”* (difficult types/breeds) is enunciated with a sigh. He is as aware as anybody else of the accusations that these bulls do not charge (in the right way, or with enough consistency), and that this is the reason that Partido de Resina is considered a *'minoritario'* estate. However, grouped together, coming from the mouth of the foreman as he entered the Partido de Resina estate stables, the names of the different estates are said not without a little pride. They reference not only a prestigious selection of bull breeders, but a sentiment of resistance; each *ganadero* working in a niche, breeding animals true to (their) type against the backdrop of the hegemony of the *'comercial'* bulls. The stables might need mucking out, the bolts on the doors might need replacing, and the water system might need fixing, but we were still in great company.

However, perhaps for Joaquín the grey days were less about this feeling of battling through, and more about quiet and calm. This notwithstanding, the romance of his profession is constantly present, there are moments of his life which are not so different from the black and white postcard images of local stockmen wading through flooded terrain, herding the famous marshland bulls, back when Partido de Resina was partially submerged during winter and when the estate stretched into what is now Doñana National Park. His twitter popularity is built precisely on the perceived authenticity of his role as 'knower' of the bulls, gatekeeper to their world. Romance aside, mud and wet – he just said *'agua'* (water) - made access to the fields difficult, but work was easier without the exhausting presence of the sun.

Yet the effect of the weather on the bulls was problematic. They became loud and relatively belligerent at this time of year. Frisky is probably not the appropriate word, but break-outs would suddenly become routine, as would fraternal spats. Jero, Jesús, or whomever happened to be helping out at the time, joked about the obvious “horniness” of the half-tonne animals, indicating that I should note down their (the bulls') enthusiasm for the opposite sex.

Death was not so readily joked about, not in the arena and certainly not on the estate, particularly if it was a case of death by injury. At bullfights, Joaquín – usually sparing or risk averse when it came to displays of approval – would applaud a good *estoque*, the killing thrust, but also a good death: a bull that stayed on his feet, facing his challengers, ideally not even retreating to the barriers but remaining in the open until he keels over fully without the usual intermediate period of lying down. As I handled newborn calves, he would frequently remind me that *“eso”* (“this” – implying the cuteness and relative intimacy of such moments) is tied directly to what happens in the arena. The comments on the photos he posted of young fighting stock reaffirmed a perceived tension between being cute and being a fighting animal destined to die by the sword. Sometimes it was as if Joaquín – when talking to me – and his followers – when talking among themselves – were addressing an *'anti'* (anti-bullfighting activist) just behind me or just off screen: someone who might make the mistake of assuming that a calf's cuteness precluded any possibility of it being innately aggressive. In this context, images of calves charging at

humans, horses, or vehicles, drew adorableness and fighting essence together in a way that pleased.

"Bajas" (losses) occur throughout the year on estates which breed animals for bullfighting, ranging from animals that are stillborn, to the expiration of older brood cows, to the calamitous injury and death of a mature bull already destined for a particular arena. Such casualties are inevitable, part of what makes the countryside the countryside *(campo)*, as almost everyone who works on or is involved with the estate emphasised to me at some point. Nogales would laugh at me for pointing this out and probably say *"¿Qué vas a hacer? ¿Llamar al cura?"* ("What are you going to do? Call the priest?") In that sense, these deaths are routine, not so very different from death on a farm that produces cattle for meat or milk, or a horse breeder, of which there were more than a few in the area. However, the loss of mature male animals, the products of years of labour and care, and the purpose of the whole project, takes on special significance in the context of the breeding of fighting stock. It is very much death in the wrong place. Despite the countryside being the "proper domain" of the fighting bull (Marvin 1988, 134), its death is discursively situated in the arena. Each such death also put pressure on Joaquín and Algora because there were limited numbers from which to choose a replacement, with almost every beast earmarked for a particular event, or at the very least a grade of event or plaza. Partido de Resina's particular situation in terms of stock numbers and limited acreage of decent pasture, a situation shared by many minority breeders, also meant that the unexpected loss of a good breeding cow or her offspring represented an injury to the estate and its future.

The positioning of the skip where the *bajas* ended up was probably just for mundane convenience, but, for myself at least, it served as a daily reminder that not every fighting animal ends up in the arena. There are many different life trajectories at play in the breeding of *toros bravos*, but some trajectories count more than others: the lives of some animals are more salient and shape things round them in ways not always predictable or controllable.

In order to draw this thesis to a close and prefiguring my conclusion, in the body of this chapter I dwell on the enchantment and re-enchantment of the taurine countryside, and the emplacement of the bulls within this landscape, as they live, die and reproduce.

The stud bull

Escandoloso, number 27, is an animal whose life is salient. Despite the fact that he has never left the estate to make his name on the sand or in the streets, and never will, he is a bull who matters: *un semental* (a stud bull). The months he spends running with his herd of cows – the Silos lot – will see nearly a quarter of the estate's annual output bear his stamp, potentially for many years running. The selection of stud bulls like him is thus very important. Algora, by way of example, traces the strength issues of recent generations of *pabloromeros* to one ill-chosen stud bull, whose influence he was now actively having to combat. For Algora, unlike Cassidy's (2002, 100) breeders of Thoroughbred racehorses, breeding does make a difference; it is efficacious both positively and negatively. Mistakes can be made, but progress is possible. Breeders might appear to think primarily in terms of female *reatas* (lineages), each bull named after his mother, but every stud bull marks several such family lines at once; his characteristics – both physical and in terms of character and performance - are chosen to complement those of the cows insofar as possible given the overriding need to maintain genetic distance in a limited pool. That said, despite the stud bulls' relative impact on the estate, Algora emphasises that when it comes to selection tests, the same criteria are applied equally exigently to both sexes. Other than instances in which a bull gets pardoned *(indultado)* for his exceptional performance in the arena and comes back to the estate, stud bulls are typically tested in house. The efficacy of genealogy is also widely taken for granted in the world of Doma Vaquera and horse breeding. Although the steers at Partido de Resina are not thought of in terms of breeding (they are castrated fighting animals of poor quality from the estate), other estates use specific breeds of tame cattle as steers, and again breeding matters. The linking factor is performance: breeding and blood cease to matter once a cow is destined for the slaughterhouse, or when there is no *cabestrero* to train the steers.

During my time on the Partido de Resina estate, the number of active *sementales* was always at least four, although at one point there were eight animals being considered for the role. Recall that the overall herd of breeding cows hovered around 110 head. Each stud animal had to prove that he could produce in the most basic sense over the first season, that is successfully cover and impregnate all, or nearly all, the females allocated to him, before the longer-term process of judging the performance of his offspring began. As is the case with hot-branding and freeze marking, Artificial Insemination is, on the

whole, seen as something outside the world of the bulls: invasive in a negative way. Although Algora would dispute this – he is relatively open when it comes to searching for ways to modernise the industry.

If fighting bulls are the kings of the countryside, then stud bulls like Escandoloso are a special kind of royalty: a kind whose members' lives are fulfilling above and beyond the ideal trajectory of a fighting bull. Rather than just being born, weaned, then growing fat and strong with his brothers before representing his estate in the arena, the stud bull also **lives well** in a more generic sense, that of the male animal. If he is thin or looks despondent, it is because he has had too much of a good thing and has been tired out by his *"harem"* of cows. The period a stud bull spends with his herd is as good as life gets for a bull, while the rest of the year is figured as *un descanso*, a (long) break during which he can recuperate with his fellow studs.

I remember a two-week period of cooler, wetter weather in November, when the appropriately named Escandoloso had repeatedly, scandalously, broken out of his enclosure, shared with the other stud bulls. He had then proceeded to smash his way through several gates to get to Silos and his cows, who were just beginning to calve at that time. It was far too early for him to run with the herd, so each morning, when his escape was discovered, we had to go and fetch him. Otherwise, he risked throwing the whole life cycle out of sync. Not only would there be young calves at foot during the January disease screening, but both weaning and branding would be made more difficult because the cohort of young animals would vary too much in size. The prospect of these problems leant urgency to the task of returning him to his brother bulls, which we ended up having to do several times over the course of that fortnight.

Stud bulls tend to become more accustomed to being moved around by humans on horseback, their longer lives allow them to become familiar with their caretakers. These developing relationships are celebrated in taurine media. For example, the extreme nobility of a bull from one estate was celebrated in an episode of Toros Para Todos. The bull even allowed the presenter, Enrique Romero, a stranger, to approach him and give him a rub while eating, albeit a nervous one. But, they are still of course potentially dangerous,

especially in a situation where they want to be in one place (e.g with their herd), while their handlers want them in another place. When Enrique Romero came to the Partido de Resina estate, the story told about *sementales* was the opposite; rather than being about interspecies friendship, it was about danger and risk. Joaquín never missed an opportunity to remind his audience that he was dealing with a particularly difficult type of bull, that singular animal, the *pabloromero*, and so the inherent danger of handling stud bulls was amplified. His words were enlivened – made real and turned into something more than just boasts – when a docile, tired-out stud bull transformed into an alert, combative beast on screen, growing a good foot in the process. The creature suddenly had all the energy of a four-year old version of himself, but layered with years of guile, making him dangerously judicious when it came to putting effort into a charge.

"Sabe." ("He knows.")

The riders who move such animals, Escandoloso being a prime example, constantly have to weigh up whether or not to face down the stud bull who turns back. Does he just want to slip by and rejoin the herd, and so can he be bullied into continuing? Or will shouts and forward pressure cause him to charge? When do you become the object of his attention, rather than just an obstacle in his path?

What is more, in the case of Escandoloso, the steers disliked the route we had to take in order to extract him from Silos, or perhaps they disliked the high tension and the need for perfect timing in this exercise, as they had to be positioned just so in order to successfully 'catch' the errant bull when Joaquín managed to separate him from the herd. They too were excitable with the return of the cooler weather and given the slightest opportunity would skip round Zahara and myself, and then hightail it back to the corrals, leaving us to deal with an irate Joaquín and the *"hijo de puta"* ("son of a whore") of a bull who just wanted to be with his cows. A desire which was figured as only *natural*: the normal order of things.

After several days of this, with the gate posts of the intervening fields increasingly awry, and hasty repairs making no difference, Joaquín and Algora decided to bring Escandoloso in and put him in one of the *chiqueros*, the dark cells where individual fighting animals wait to be loaded or to go into the arena. Joaquín used the word punishment *(castigo)* to describe the process, but followed this up by saying that the bull would emerge calmer and less interested in the smell of the distant cows. This initially struck me as counterintuitive; would frustrating the bull's desire, as well as his liberty, not make things worse? No, he would “relax”, came the response. I let it drop, but later revisited the taurine ethology book Algora had handed me all those months ago at the beginning of my fieldwork, as if to say “Here is how bulls work, here is how I see taurine behaviour, as a vet. Now go with Joaquín and learn for yourself.” Of course Algora had not said that, but the implication was that there was a scientific base to how things worked with the bulls, and to the procedures on the estate. The animals become bundles of nerves, hormones, and behavioural sequences: you take away the stimulus and they return to a neutral state.

And he did. After two episodes of 'punishment', Escandoloso settled back into the routine of fraternal living. Though who was to say whether or not the changing wind direction or the ongoing hormonal cycles of the cows might have been a factor too. If the escapes had continued, he would have risked being sent to the slaughterhouse (*"pa' carne"* - "for meat"), as Joaquín had threatened in moments of anger. He would have gone from stud bull to liability, and thus fallen off the trajectory he was following with his brothers. Too difficult, too knowing, and too horny to be a king among kings. A fate Joaquín also risked if his bulls consistently failed to perform and thus legitimise his accession to his office (*su oficio*).

To slaughter

Going "for meat" *("pa' carne")* is a story, or one of the stories, which I have left largely untold in this thesis. In the field, I found that following the Partido de Resina animals when they did go for meat was not easy, both in terms of practicalities (it was hard to justify and would have put Joaquín in a socially awkward position if I had pushed him to let me accompany the animals beyond his jurisdiction[37]) and in terms of the way I found that this part of the life trajectories of the stock was less prominent, or less visible. It was not that the slaughter process was downplayed, in fact the language Joaquín and the others used to refer to what was happening was often the opposite of euphemistic. Rather, it was that slaughter of fighting stock did not figure in a larger story about what these kinds of animal are, or should be, according to the social world Joaquín had grown up in the village and now inhabited as foreman. Economically speaking, the meat does not fetch a high price, but the Morales family looked to recoup their losses wherever they could (breeding fighting bulls is in almost every case a loss-making enterprise for *ganaderos* – it's positioned as something people do *por afición,* rather than for profit: a luxury.)

Above, going for meat is figured as the ultimate punishment, the final consequence for repeated misbehaviour on Escandoloso's part, but of course going to the abattoir and becoming meat is not actually exceptional in the case of fighting cattle. Although it would be in the case of a mature fighting bull, whose appropriate place of death is in the arena.

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This would have put Joaquín in *un compromiso* (a bind), where he would then have owed the slaughterhouse people a favour.

His carcass is converted to meat round the back of the plaza, in a separate, highly regulated process. In fact, the slaughterhouse lorry came to Partido de Resina from nearby Pilas several times while I was in the field. It was a last opportunity for the owning syndicate to earn some money from animals who had exhausted their possible trajectories on the estate, part of being a *ganadero* (animal breeder/farmer) in the looser sense (i.e. not specifically a breeder of fighting bulls). The lorry's presence was not routine, but it was consistent, like the sporadic but regular losses which occupied the skip. The painted metal sides of the lorry had not rusted to the same extent, but the containers still echoed one another in my mind, both strikingly industrial when juxtaposed with the adobe and cobbles of the main estate courtyard, or the wool and leather of our saddles. The agri-industrial machinery was the underbelly of the countryside so celebrated by Joaquín and his local compatriots, something common to the general working realities of local rural life, rather than specifically to *el campo bravo/vaquero* (the fighting/cattle-handling countryside).

Nobody came to watch when the animals going for slaughter were loaded, although there were a few of us there to help. It was a non-event, unlike when the bulls embarked for the arena. The day certainly was not labelled in the same way: *el embarcamiento.* It was sudden, brought up one week in a chat outside Algora's office, and arranged over the phone by the next. The animals were as fat as they were going to get and the owner's office wanted to know when the money was going to change hands. Joaquín communicated via WhatsApp with a secretary who, as far as I understood, managed various aspects of the Morales' agricultural and business portfolio, not just Partido de Resina.

One lot of meat animals stands out in my mind in particular; it was a combination of superfluous steers and a dozen or so cows who had failed to make the 2013/2014 selection. The former were clumsily enormous. They were of a different Portuguese breed, great red beasts, placid and slow alongside Quito, El Borracho, and Negri, their fighting stock cousins. The cows accompanying them to Pilas had matured enough to fill out, but were not comparable in size to the Portuguese *bueyes*. They had lost the physical finesse they had possessed just under a year ago when the first of their generation will have been tested in the estate arena. They had been finished (brought up to weight) on hard feed away from the open pastures of the calving fields, and that, along with the fact that they had never calved, gave them a different aspect to the young cows who had made the

selection and were now out grazing in Silos, Ojo, Abulaga and Eucalipto. Maybe it was the company of the tame steers, with their squared off, unathletic bodies, but to my eye the meat cows, because that was what they were now, were built differently to their more fortunate sisters out in the calving fields. They were round, instead of sleek; the products of distinct feeding regimes. Even their field was different, a ramshackle arrangement of fences, troughs and sheds where the corrals abutted the track that led out to the main road. It was a far cry from the calving fields, a landscape somewhere between taurine *dehesa* and marshland, whose woodland and brush afforded the animals privacy and made their lives photogenic, but, beyond that, in a wider sense made them what they are: fighting animals.

The transformation from fighting cow to meat cow was also anticipated in the slightly carefree way in which we brought the animals in. We lingered a moment longer outside the shelter of the corner barricades in the corrals when they passed. We pushed a little bit closer behind them, almost close enough to walk them along by tapping their backsides with a stick. It was not as if we were no longer dealing with fighting stock, but we acted as if that was the case, despite the fact that the cows were not far off full maturity and were still, in reality, as fierce as any other *vaca brava*.

I did not take any photos as the animals were prodded into the lorry, sharing large compartments, unlike the individual crates in which the bulls travel to the arena. In a very real sense, there was nothing to photograph: no *naturaleza*, no idealised nurturing relationship between mother and calf, no lionised fighting animal. This was no longer the world of the bulls. It was just another lorry of livestock bound for the local slaughterhouse. Joaquín could appreciate photos of tractors struggling through mud, or of his tattooed arm tackling a seized-up bolt, that is photos of prized, rustic, working masculinity. But taking photos of the Pilas lorry would have been too much, because it would directly conflict with the idyllically framed story of the king of the countryside. It would be too close to the *antitaurino* genre of photos which sought to undermine the aesthetic of death in the arena with images of dead bulls being unceremoniously hoiked up into refrigerated lorries in tractor buckets.

“Ecological” meat

The majority of the cattle who went for meat were bought outright and so transacted cleanly. No further input from the estate was necessary once the animals and their ear-tags had been handed over and their paperwork processed. I was not even sure if all or any of the meat would be sold as 'fighting' meat, or whether it would just disappear into the system as cheap beef. However, there were exceptions to this transactional model, particularly when it came to ensuring the continued good position of the estate in the local area, both in the Aznalcazar municipality, where it was technically located, and in Villamanrique, the nearest village. The connections to this wider area take various forms, including mayors and their entourages beings invited to and attending exclusive *tentaderos* (testing events) on the estate. Or, more informally, the way estate staff and associated volunteers represent direct connections to nearby towns, with their family and friends swelling the crowds at open-gate events such as the *herradero* (branding of yearlings). In the latter case, historically the degree of *señorial* input has varied, with the Pablo Romero family still remembered in the village for the way they laid on vast trays of chickpea stew for the locals who assisted with the branding before they sold up in the 1990s. The number of estate employees was much higher then and although many of the workers came from Bormujos (beyond Aznalcazar and closer to Seville), where the Pablo Romero family had more land, there were plenty from Villamanrique, including my teacher Pajito's father.

It was in this idiom that each year, during my fieldwork, two cows went, via Pilas, to a National Day *fiesta* in Villamanrique de la Condesa, held in honour of the local branch of the Guardia Civil. Joaquín, newly annointed *majoral*, was encouraged to attend and I accompanied him, unsure what to expect but happy to be able to follow the pabloromero cows to a new context. When we arrived, we saw that the meat had been casseroled and was being served up on paper plates, which were being taken to the tables where there were free seats, the sauce to be soaked up with thinly cut fried potatoes. It surprised me that cows from Partido de Resina had been chosen for this event. I had heard, and read, that up until recently the beef from fighting cattle was considered tough and sold at the cheaper end of the scale when it goes through the system. Although, both Marvin (1988, 34) and Douglass (1997, 200) describe how meat from bulls fought in the arena is

sometimes given to charity or consumed as *carne de toro bravo* (fighting bull meat) in the aftermath of taurine events.

In this case, the dish was not the focus of the gathering. Although when we did talk to people and the connection was made between Joaquín and the meat, it was praised. When it emerged that I was an anthropologist studying the world of the bulls, several people took the opportunity to point out that the beef of fighting animals was "the most eco-friendly *(ecológico)* beef in the world/that there is", echoing the rash of articles I had seen online and in sections of the press promulgating the meat - *carne de toro bravo* – as a hitherto much underappreciated, essentially Spanish, delicacy. This relatively new desirability, routed in the pastoral environment the cows were assumed to have inhabited, compounded the affective weight of the animals' place in local history, including the decline of bull-breeding in the area and pride in the good-looking bulls of the *marismas*.

> "The bull lives for four years in the open air in the countryside, in an environment of absolute liberty and with an alimentary base made up of natural produces. In this sense, it can be said that the breeding of these bovines is ecological [green/environmentally-friendly]..."
>
> María Todo, abc.es[38] [Newspaper/website]

The idea that the meat of fighting stock is environmentally-friendly and that this should become an integral part of the defence of the *fiesta* is gaining traction, as is the idea that it could help form a commercial basis for the industry (Caballero de la Calle 2005). Part of this argument is rooted in the fact that most *ganaderías bravas*, Partido de Resina being a notable exception, are in areas of poor agricultural potential: marginal land where cattle have to be grazed extensively (*ibid.* 2). Other factors include the relative age of the cows when they have their first calf, the long period of suckling, and slow growth rate of the animals (*ibid.* 2). Even if the cows that get fattened up for meat do so on a smaller lot at Partido de Resina, they grow up in these conditions and are thus discursively and materially associated with the extensive landscape of the *dehesa*.

38 Toro, M. (2016, accessed December 2017) Las "virtudes" que desconocías de la carne de toro de lidia. ABC Sociedad. Available online: abc.es/sociedad/abci-virtudes-desconocias-carne-toro-lidia-201607281913_noticia.html

Somewhere between the walls of the slaughterhouse in Pilas, hidden among another set of industrial units, and the gas rings of the caterers at the Guardia Civil party, the meat we were consuming was thus re-enchanted. It was bound up once more with the landscape of the s*ementales* and their herds of cows, and the fraternal lots of fighting bulls, grazing peacefully above and in the marshes. Although he did not do so, I could easily imagine Joaquín posing with a plate of the casserole and posting the image online with a comment which connected it to good life of the **fighting** animal, his emphasis on the nature of these cows, and the way they support a wider way of life, firm. Just as he had posed with a National Park biologist who had come to the estate to release a black-winged kite fledgling: “This species, as well as many others, nests looking for peace and quiet in Partido de Resina, thanks to the fighting bull.”

In such moments, when Joaquín tweets to his followers, almost all *taurinos*, or when the meat of fighting cows becomes good, claiming the label 'eco-friendly', the bulls, and those that care for them in a professional capacity, face an appreciative public. The taurine countryside, and by extension the wider world of the bulls can be imagined not only as a reservoir of conservative values and a particularly Andalusian working aesthetic, but also as a reservoir of other kind of good, including biodiversity and environmentally friendly meat production.

Moreover, beyond the environment, beyond local history and pride, the presence of the Partido de Resina meat on our paper plates highlights a kind of good particular to Joaquín's rise in this world. As I mentioned above, he often repeats the argument that the bulls “feed families”, standard rhetoric in defence of the bulls, but, in this case, it is Joaquín speaking and underlying the statement is the suggestion that the bulls feed him. “I'm the only one in my family with a salary.” Or, put more bluntly, the suggestion is that the bulls have lifted him into a distinct category of people *(gente)*, a class of person he calls *'profesional'*. It is in this capacity that he can circulate at events like the Guardia Civil celebration as representative of the estate. Of course, with this privilege, comes the constant menace of losing the job, of being “put out onto the street” if the estate were to change hands, or his handling of the bulls was called into question.

The pardoned animal

One of Escandoloso's companions, a fellow stud bull during my 2013-2015 fieldwork, was called Potrico. He was not a particularly stand-out animal, beyond his obvious salience in his role as *semental.* He did not have the roguish character of Escandoloso. There were no escapes and chaotic, dangerous retrievals involving him, nor was he particularly striking to look at, from my perspective at least. However, his name, Potrico, preceded him, I had heard it even before I started on the estate, whispered repeatedly by an elderly gentleman who accosted me in the corner bar at 06:15am on one of my first days in Villamanrique, while having breakfast. He was there, he saw Potrico. I was initially confused, unsure who or what Potrico was, not quite following the deep *andaluz* of the man.

I asked my neighbour, Antionio, and he responded to the name immediately, also with a sense of urgent reverence: 23rd of May, 1968; La Monumental, Barcelona, a Pablo Romero bull fought by Andrés Hernando and subsequently pardoned in an arena famously intransigent when it comes to letting great animals live, with exacting standards when it comes to *bravura*. Antonio's literate, carefully researched *afición* showed as he reeled off the key details. The fact that Potrico had lingered on in the arena for hours, long after public had been asked to leave, stubbornly refusing to join up with the strange steers in a way characteristic of the 'difficult' pabloromero animal added to the charm of the story. As did his service as a stud bull until his death in 1977, nine years later.

Cubanito II, the best Partido de Resina bull fought in Madrid in 2014, although in many ways a good exemplar, did not come very close to having his life spared. A pardoning – *un indultado* – had thus far escaped the estate since its acquisition by the Morales syndicate. Books, articles, and *aficionados* like Antonio could list significant bulls – Joyerito, 1999, fought by 'El Fundi' in Madrid stands out in particular, as an “emblem of the estate” (Prieto Garrido, 2012) - but none had the full charm of the pardoned bull: an animal who has lived the double ideal of the arena and the countryside to the fullest. Conditions in the world of the bulls right now see few pardonings of bulls from minority types – *los encastes complicados* – due to the emphasis placed on the last stage of the bullfight and endless, repeated passes required of the modern bull. Whether it is the bulls who are at fault, or the *fiesta* itself (bullfighting taken as a totality) depends on the commentator. A pardoned

Partido de Resina animal would still be remembered in fifty years, as Potrico has been, but right now it is just a dream, a hoped for future. The foreman, and bull-breeder, would also be remembered. By way of example, and as if to keep the Partido de Resina dream alive, Cobradiezmos, of Victorino Martín, another *ganadería* of 'grey bulls' was pardoned in Sevilla in 2016, by the *torero* Manuel Escribano, marking the first *indultado* in ten years for that estate, and also, in the words of Victorino himself, reaffirming that they [the estate] are heading in the right direction (interviewed by Paloma Moreno for La Razón, 2016[39]).

The pardoned bull represents a kind of super-trajectory, eclipsing the lives of the cows who end up as casserole, even as the consumption of this kind of meat draws on the idyll of the stud bull and his harem in the countryside. With the pardoned bull travels the foreman, as he does with every success, or failure, of the estate. Joaquín needs the confirmation of a success in order to stabilise his position. Although he never directly expressed a fear of falling back into a life as a man from a less desirable area of the village, the way he described his own trajectory and the opportunity which had been given as foreman had this fear of regression built into it. The categories *'toro'* and *'mayoral'* both have their own gravity, folding lives into them, contingent on performance, as in the case of Escandoloso and Joaquín.

39 Moreno, P. (2016 – accessed december 2017) Victorino Martín: "Esperamos que "Cobradiezmos" transmita a sus descendencia sus virtudes". La Razón. Available online: larazon.es/toros/victorino-martin-esperamos-que-cobradiezmos-transmita-a-su-descendencia-todas-sus-virtudes-OG12417889

Conclusion

Update, December 2017

Joaquín has not yet had a triumph, no particularly successful *corridas* and no pardoned bulls, though he has two important events in Nimes and Madrid coming up in May 2018. However, he is still *mayoral*, working under Algora and the Morales family. The Partido de Resina estate is much as it was when I first encountered it in 2013: moving forwards through time, but not making any uncontested ground in terms of notable improvements in performance. The *sementales* have been changed and several new generations of cows are bearing calves. Some of the buildings have received a coat of paint, many of the fences have new holes in them, hastily repaired with baler twine. Joaquín rides a younger horse, now a more experienced *caballista*.

The *pabloromero encaste* keeps going, the same debates taking place every year. Is it in recuperation or decline? Are the *toros modernos* or *comerciales* the way forward, making the Partido de Resina relics of a more serious past? Joaquín's charges remain a very particular kind of creature, fighting bulls that live sandwiched between fruit plantations in what was once marshlands. Their character and physique, as individuals, as *corridas*, and as an *encaste* are still difficult.

Joaquín does not seem to think that bullfighting is going away anytime soon and is convinced he can stay the course and keep his job. I see photos of the foreman teaching his nephew to draw round his little body a bull's head on a trolley, using a cape.

Multispecies romance

In this thesis different iterations of romance – understood loosely as the valuing and pursuit of certain kinds of authenticity and connection – play against and alongside one another. As I suggest in my introduction, the state of the modern bullfight can partially be understood as being the result of a romantic shift: from tumult and *fiesta*, to art and authenticity. This change has its roots, as Andreu argues, in the nineteenth century, with the publication of *Tauromaquia Completa* by the bullfighter Francisco Montes 'Paquiro'

(2016, 429). The triumph of the artistic style of the *torero* Juan Belmonte in Madrid in 1917 can be see as capturing the moment when the romantic, aesthetically-charged emphasis on the relationship between the bull and the solitary, upright figure of the bullfighter became the central motif of modern bullfighting (Romero de Solís 2010, 24). In this reading, contemporary tauromachy is a "Mannerist art" in that its focus on technical prowess and elegance might be considered indulgent and self-referential, especially given a perceived loss of profundity relative to earlier forms of bullfighting (*Ibid.* 32). A profundity rooted precisely in the integrity *(intregridad)*, seriousness *(seriedad)* and hereditary quality *(casta)* of fighting bulls as a breed generally, and bulls like the Partido de Resina animals, particularly.

The lines of poetry/song at the start of each chapter in this thesis – segments of *sevillanas* written by José León – capture some of the now regnant discourses when it comes to the romance and authenticity of the world of the bulls. In each chapter I have then tried to complicate some of the normative aspects of these dominant narratives in the world of the bulls, which might be framed as what Marvin (2015, 41) has called "the language of the bullfight", that is, its own explanatory framework. As I have argued, the aesthetics, history, and language of this world – and its **qualities** or "matters of concern" (Latour 2007, 5) – also, to some extent, bleed into a wider constellation of Andalusian and Spanish *tradiciones*. These traditions include Doma Vaquera and Catholic pilgrimage, which by assocation position the bulls and my fieldsite in Spain and Europe as seats of a certain kind of rural heritage, one that is often controversial when seen from the "other Spain": the Spain represented (sometimes caricatured) in the figure of the metropolitan, *antitaurino* and anti-clerical Podemos voter. Each *sevillana* thus introduces an emic, often romantic trope concerning the bulls and their companion traditions, seen from within. My own writing, tinged with the romance of apprenticeship and multispecies encounter, goes on to locate these emic tropes in the complex, constantly-moving context of the lives of the Partido de Resina animals and my human informants. One form of romance plays off against another.

The epigraph at the beginning of Chapter One introduces the figure of the old foreman, dispensing advice next to the fire and instilling *afición* (passion for this world) and *saber-hacer* (know-how) in the next generation. I juxtapose this representation with an account of Joaquín coming into the role of *mayoral* as a young, self-described "normal person" from

the *pueblos*. In this chapter, *saber-hacer* emerges not as something that is straightforwardly passed on to the next generation, as in the poem, but instead as a form of practical, although contested, knowledge that emerges through interactions with fighting stock, especially cows and their calves.

In Chapter Two reading a fragment from José León's "Lost were the secrets" taught us that the old ways of the profession and the world of the bulls and Doma Vaquera exercise a certain power, but are felt to be under threat. This narrative sits uncomfortably with the rupture that Joaquín represents from a past dominated by hereditary occupation of the role of *conocedor* of the *pabloromero* bulls. In my analysis, the branding of fighting stock is figured as a site where knowledge of the bulls is reconstituted and reappropriated, rather than transmitted.

A romantic sentiment and a temporality of decline are echoed in Chapter Three's section of the "I'm pro-bullfighting, gentlemen" *sevillana*, with its imagery of a dying arena and an industry under siege. The chapter unsettles the idea of an unspoilt, essentialised past by showing how the testing of fighting cows suggests that *casta* (hereditary class and quality) is a constantly moving target, rather than merely something to be preserved.

In Chapter Four the figure of the good hack canters onto the stage, bridging the world of the bulls and a wider cultural space of *flamenquismo*, with its connotations of conservative, traditional Andalusia and Spain. But good blood, style *(estilo)* and skill also show themselves to be dynamic and contingent, expressing aspects of class and history as much as essence.

Chapter Five's *sevillana* is, at first glance, incongruous, since it describes the scents and sounds of the road to El Rocío and introduces a chapter about the bullfight itself, but it highlights a crucial link between the foreman, good fortune, and the Virgin Mary. Joaquín is frank about the partial nature of his faith and also occasionally fatalistic when it comes to the difficulties of escaping the narrative of decline that plagues the Partido de Resina estate, which has a force of its own and can be situated in relation to wider concerns about what modern bullfighting should be about. As Romero de Solís asserts, the world of the bulls, far from being a repository of unchanging tradition, has been historically plastic, has preceded, anticipated, reflected and also reconstituted broader cultural shifts (2010, 27).

Chapter Six's epigraph explores more fully the relatively new link between the breeding of different types of fighting bull (*encastes*) and the environment, or a specific kind of ecology, the open woodland of the *dehesa*, of which the bull is an integral part: the death of one is connected to the death of the other. This can be seen as a new romantic positioning of Nature in bullfighting: from a conception of it as raw force, opposed to and dominated by the skilled man, to a biodiverse ecology dependent on and therefore protected by the bulls. Presented as straightforward in the poem, these links in fact emerge as relatively precarious in the case of the Partido de Resina bulls, who are at particular risk when it comes to modern biosecurity regimes.

Finally, at the beginning of the last chapter José León's lyrics reiterate the link between fighting stock and the arena, with an additional discursive distancing of the bulls from the abattoir and other kinds of cattle. The work done to maintain the romance of the bulls, particularly when it comes to death, new life, the consumption of fighting animals as *carne ecólogica* (environmentally-friendly meat) and the idealised trajectory of the stud bull, subsequently become apparent as I locate processes of re-enchantment and explore which deaths count in the world of the bulls and which do not.

Forms of authenticity *(autenticidad)*, truth *(verdad)*, and integrity, often mediated through aesthetics, serve as definitive points of reference and departure in the contemporary world of the bulls, even if the social lives of these concepts prove to be complicated on closer inspection. On the one hand, for example, there exists a strong notion of transmittable, heritable *saber-hacer* (professional and amateur know-how) anchored in an always-more-authentic past; on the other, forms of working, rural sociality and a concomitant sense that rural, religious and taurine traditions are (positively) rooted *(arraigado)* in El Aljarafe and *pueblos* liked Villamanrique de la Condesa. An alternative example of rooted, essentialist – perhaps romantic – thinking at my fieldsite is evident in the case of the *selección* of fighting cows, where the local genealogical paradigm posits that the essence of the *encaste* can be made visible through the testing of these cows in the arena and then refined over time. Authenticity, rootedness and essence are implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) invoked and experienced against an Other who does not understand this world, for example the figure of the city-living *antitaurino* who cannot see that the bulls live better than other cattle. In his work in South Carolina, where small scale farm-to-fork food

production networks stress “connection”, Weiss explores a different, if related, kind of authenticity (2012, 227). He considers authenticity to be both an “organizing principle” and “a concrete characteristic that is materially present” in the different entities and relationships of his fieldsite (*Ibid.*). In the same way, the romance of the bulls, captured both in José León’s poems and in Joaquín’s own concerns with and rebuttals of taurine tradition, at once structures a wider totality – the world of the bulls – and is structured by actual encounters between humans, horses and fighting stock in the countryside. Thus although the poems serve as a reminder of the simplifying, totalising forms discourses of authenticity, truth, decline and resistance can take, and although I have worked to complicate these discourses by locating them in the lives of my informants, I have at the same time tried to show the way they are embedded in materiality and in ways of being with animals.

Romance is, of course, not absent in anthropological theory and forms of ethnographic fieldwork either. The central contribution of this thesis to the now firmly-established human-animal or multispecies literature is to ask whether we should be wary of the possibility of over-emphasising intersubjectivity and face-to-face encounter when it comes to animals whose social affordances overlap with ours, such as horses and cattle. I am as much a victim of this tendency as anyone else, as I, like Locke with elephants (2017, 359), initially framed my research as a kind of interspecies apprenticeship. My chosen fieldwork style, which involved striving to become involved in everyday multispecies working relationships and maximising time spent on horseback with the stock, was in fact geared precisely towards a close exploration of human-animal intimacy, antagonistic and otherwise. This emphasis on forms of connection or relation between human subjects and other kinds of subject/self/person is an important corrective to older approaches that have been accused of backgrounding or ignoring animals as active participants in the lives of our informants and in our research (see Maurstad, Davis, and Cowles 2013; Kohn 2010; Knight 2005; Locke 2017). However, as I suggest in my introduction, and as Carrithers, Bracken & Emery (2011) and Candea (2010) argue in different ways, this new emphasis is not without its own rhetorical force and politics, or, arguably, its own romance.

In the case of my research, my interest in the intimacy of the relationships between *vaqueros* and their horses, or *toreros* and the bulls they “play”, was rudely challenged in the field by other ethnographically salient kinds of animal entity and relationship. While the

individuality and responsive, sentient presence of animals frequently emerged as important, for instance in the arena or in one-on-one encounters between *caballistas* and defensive mother cows, *reatas* (lineages of cows), cohorts, *corridas* (lots of bulls destined to the arena), and *encastes* (sub-types of fighting stock) also **matter**: they have material and social lives which are foregrounded and backgrounded contextually just as animal personhood is. In this light, this thesis is a call for anthropologists to place our own concerns, desires and romantic impulses under the spotlight when we do fieldwork with animals, even as we address longer term biases or absences in the discipline.

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